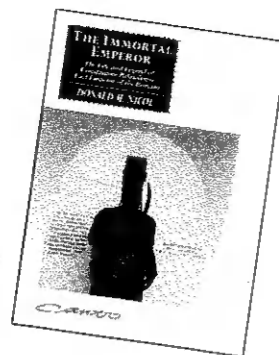
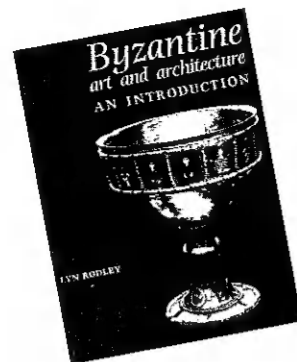


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List of Abbreviations

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>
AB	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
B	<i>Byzantion</i>
BF	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
BHG	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i>
BMGS	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
BNJ	<i>Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher</i>
BS	<i>Byzantinoslavica</i>
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CFHB	<i>Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae</i>
CSCO	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
CSHB	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae (Bonn)</i>
DHGE	<i>Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique</i>
DIEE	<i>Δελτίον τῆς ἱστορικῆς καὶ ἐθνολογικῆς ἐταιρείας τῆς Ἑλλάδος</i>
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
DTC	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i>
EEBS	<i>Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EO	<i>Échos d'Orient</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
IRAIK	<i>Izvestija Russkago Arkheologičeskago Instituta v Konstantinopole</i>
JA	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
JGR	<i>J. & P. Zepos, Jus Graecoromanum</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
JÖBG	<i>Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>

MPG	J.P. Migne, <i>Patrologia series Graeco-Latina</i>
MPL	J.P. Migné, <i>Patrologia series Latina</i>
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
RE	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Pauly-Wissowa)
REB	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
REG	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
ROC	<i>Revue de l'Orient Chrétien</i>
VV	<i>Vizantijskij Vremennik</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZRVI	<i>Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta</i>

Editorial Comment

Readers will note that this volume of *BMGS* contains two reviews. The journal has not hitherto undertaken reviews, but in view of the rapidly increasing number and range of publications relevant to the fields which concern *BMGS*, and the large number of unsolicited review copies of new publications received by the editor, the editorial board has decided to include in each volume a limited number of reviews of some of the most important new publications in the fields concerned. Books for consideration should be sent to the Reviews Editor, Dr. Dimitris Tziovas, who will select those which it is felt merit inclusion in conjunction with members of the editorial board. The journal cannot review all books sent to the editor: those which cannot be included will be placed in the library of the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies, unless publishers request otherwise.

The historiography of the thirteenth-century wall painting at Boiana: another case of parallel universes?

CLAIRE BRISBY

The historiography of the wall painting in the medieval church at Boiana is a representative case in the current critical discussion of basically empiricist approaches and more overtly theoretical methods of modern scholarship described as coexisting as parallel universes in art history today.¹ The parameters of this critical discourse offer an appropriate perspective in which to consider the historiography of these thirteenth-century schemes of wall painting in the Balkans. In turn, this exercise is useful in pointing out new directions in which reappraisals of the wall paintings at Boiana can contribute to the field of Byzantine studies.

Before tackling the bibliography on Boiana, it will be useful to describe the wall paintings of the thirteenth century and their location in the architectural interiors of the church at Boiana, particularly as the significance of location in understanding their function will be discussed later. The donor's inscription states in Old Slavonic that a Sebastokrator of noble lineage named Kaloyan built a church dedicated to St. Nicholas and to St. Panteleimon which was painted

1. I refer in particular to the critical discussion of art history carried in *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*: John Haldon, '“Jargon” vs. “the Facts”?: Byzantine History-Writing and Contemporary Debates', *BMGS* 9 (1984-85) 95-132; Robin Cormack, '“New Art History” vs. “Old History”?: writing art history', *BMGS* 10 (1986) 223-231; Leslie Brubaker, 'Parallel Universes: Byzantine art history in 1990 and 1991', *BMGS* 16 (1992) 203-233; Leslie Brubaker, 'Life imitates art. Writings on Byzantine art history, 1991-1992', *BMGS* 17 (1993) 173-223.

in 1259.² No reason has been found to doubt the validity of the date but archaeological excavations have qualified the donor's claim. A double storeyed narthex was added in 1259 to a church which already existed (Diag. 1). The upper registers of this older church are adorned with a cycle of the Feasts of the Orthodox Church, characteristic of what is regarded as the convention of the Middle Byzantine period. In addition, Christological sequences of the Infancy and Passion occupy the two upper registers of the north and south elevations of the naos respectively. Full length representations of the Church Fathers occupy the lower registers and an image of Christ enthroned inscribed *Evergetes* is also found at this level. Unusual features at Boiana are the standing representations of the founders and defenders of the Orthodox faith, Helen and Constantine and warrior saints in the lower register of the naos, rendered with a notable degree of individualisation. Traces of wall painting found under the layer of this thirteenth-century scheme indicate that it was painted over an earlier scheme.

On the vault of the chamber at ground level of the thirteenth-century narthex is a narrative cycle in eighteen scenes of the life of St. Nicholas (Diag. 2 a&b). On the walls of the chamber are full length representations of figures associated with piety and portrayals of the Bulgarian king and queen and of the donor and his wife (Diag. 2a; and plate 1). These have been highly acclaimed as exceptional in their portraiture.³ The lower narthex is windowless and contains a pair of arcosolia on the north and south walls, with scenes of the Presentation of the Virgin and of Christ Among the Doctors in their respective lunettes. These arcosolia are presumed indicative of the sepulchral function intended for this chamber although no trace of burial has been found to substantiate this.

The chamber on the upper level of the narthex replicates the dome

2. The text of the donor's inscription in the lower narthex: *This pure temple of Christ's Saint Nicholas and of the glorious Christ's martyr Panteleimon was erected from the ground with the funds care and great devotion of Sebastokrator Kaloyan cousin of the King and grandson of Saint Stephan King of Serbia. It was painted in the Bulgarian kingdom under the venerable pious and God fearing King Constantine Asen in indiction 7 year 6767 (1259).*

3. A. Grabar, *L'Eglise de Boiana* (Sofia 1924). For additional colour illustrations of these figures refer to the plates in G. Stokov, *The Architecture of the Boiana Church* (Sofia 1954).

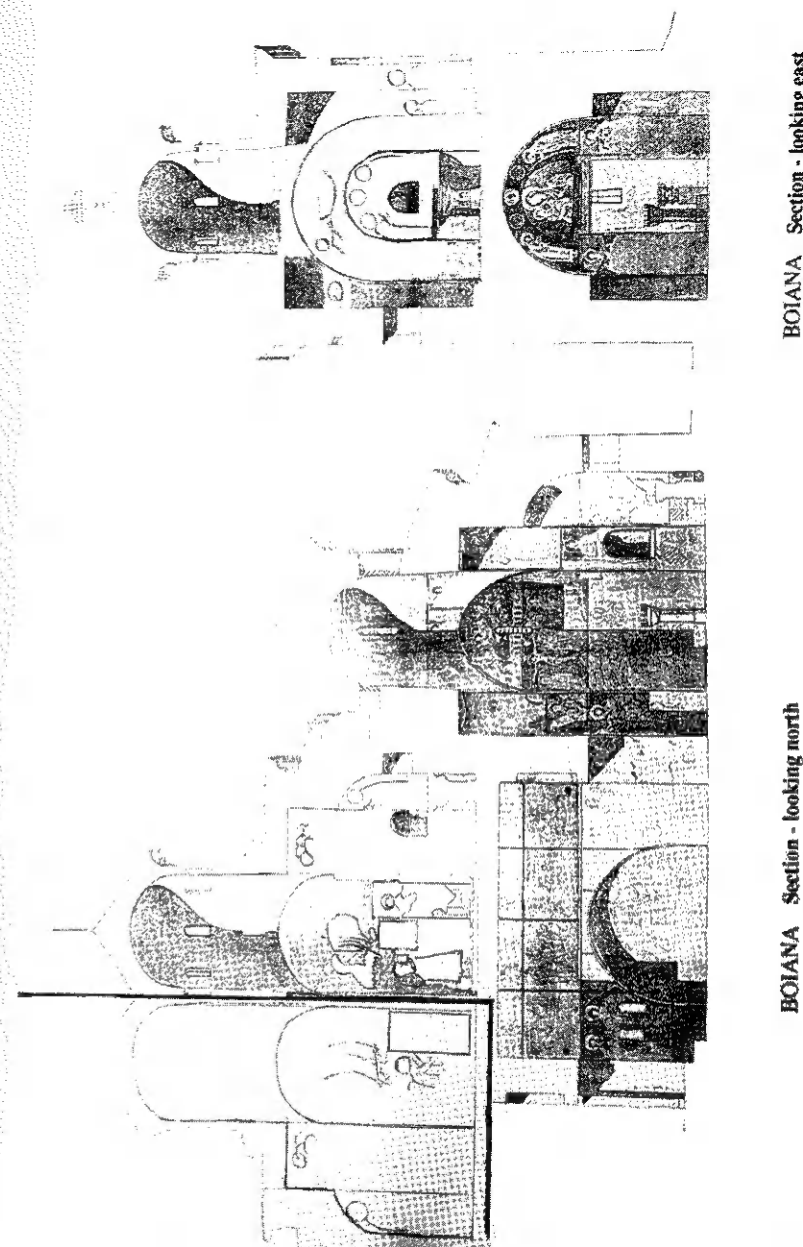


Diagram 1 Sections: location of the thirteenth-century schemes of wall paintings. Church of St. Nicholas and St. Panteleimon, Boiana.

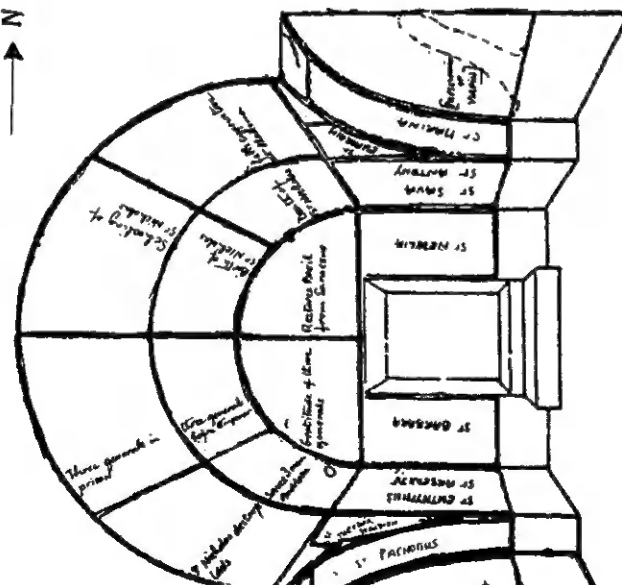
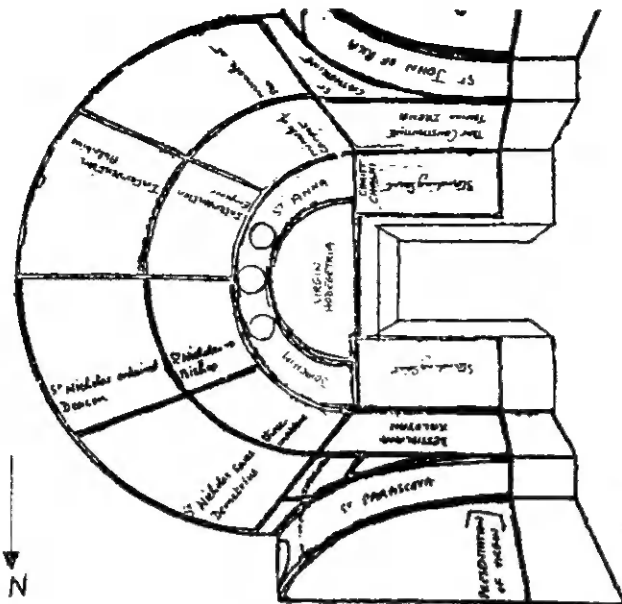


Diagram 2a & 2b Lower narthex Diag. 2a East Diag. 2b West
Church of St. Nicholas and St. Panteleimon, Boiana.



Plate 1 Donor portraits inscribed: Kaloyan Sebastokrator i ktitor Desislava
Sebastokratoritsa i ktitoritsa.
Lower narthex, north wall, church of St. Nicholas and St. Panteleimon, Boiana.

in square plan of the older church and fragments of the thirteenth-century wall painting suggest that the original scheme consisted of a liturgical cycle in which emphasis was placed on themes of death and resurrection, similar to those found in other cases of sepulchral decoration (Diag. 1).⁴ A Deesis on a monumental scale occupied the semi-dome of the apse and surviving fragments indicate a large Crucifixion in the north lunette and a correspondingly large Anastasis in the south lunette of the naos.

The integration of the mural cycles in this particularised architectural plan suggests that the motive for the thirteenth-century scheme was the sepulchral commemoration of the donor. The significance of this will be discussed more fully.

Returning to the historiography of these wall paintings, any expectation of parity in the parallelism of traditional and modern treatments will be disappointed, as the bibliography on Boiana is, in the main, characterised by empirically based approaches to issues of style and iconography. A partial explanation for this may be due to the fact the wall paintings first became a subject for scholarly research during the period between the two World Wars of this century and issues identified in the first monograph on Boiana, published by André Grabar in 1924, have provided the premise for subsequent discussion.⁵ The interest of these diverse and remarkably complete schemes of liturgical and commemorative wall painting dating from the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople has been unanimously recognised. Opinions diverge, however, in assessments of the merits of these wall paintings, accounting for dichotomy which is a persistent feature in perceptions of Boiana. On the one hand, the thirteenth-century wall paintings are viewed as reflections of the Constantinopolitan diaspora perpetuating the visual conventions of eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantine art and they are judged archaic in comparison with monumental painting in neighbouring Serbia and Macedonia.⁶ The other view hails them as precursors of the

4. A. Boschkov, *La peinture historique en Bulgarie* (Sofia 1972).

5. A. Grabar, *L'Eglise de Boiana* (Sofia 1924). Subsequently: Grabar (1924).

6. V.N. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina*, 2nd ed., (Turin 1967). Subsequently Lazarev (1967). The first edition in Russian was published in Moscow in 1947.

Paleologan style and of the Renaissance in the West as well.⁷ Exaggerated use of hyperbole and extravagant claims placing the painter of Boiana on a par with Giotto and Leonardo has fuelled a legendary reknown of distorted proportions regarding these wall paintings in Bulgaria.⁸

Having occupied a prominent position in studies of medieval Byzantine art during the first half of this century, the position of Boiana has been comparatively relegated to the background in the post-war period. The tide of interest in developing the perception of mural painting in neighbouring Serbia as a principal source of the Paleologan style accounts in part for the eclipse of Boiana. Despite having in common many of the features, identified in these basically empiricist approaches, of mural church decoration in Serbia, Boiana's painted interiors received only passing references at the Conference of Sopočani in 1967.⁹ The importance of Boiana in tracing a stylistic evolution of Paleologan art had, however, already been marginalised some ten years before the Conference of Sopočani by Otto Demus.¹⁰ The attention given to Boiana in Tania Velmans' interpretation of late medieval Byzantine wall painting, prefaced by Grabar, can be seen as an attempt ten years after the Conference of Sopočani to balance the view of Boiana's position in Balkan medieval art. Yet this assessment is unable to override the dichotomy which affects perceptions of Boiana.¹¹ Despite the remarkable qualities attributed to Boiana's wall paintings, they are nevertheless viewed as derivative of Constantinopolitan prototypes of the late Comnenian period. A prototype for the sensitivity to the human dimension in the image

7. K. Krustev & V. Zahariev, *Medieval Bulgarian Painting* (Sofia 1961) 13-15; subsequently Krustev & Zahariev (1961). This became the popular view and is found in D. Talbot Rice, *The Art of the Byzantine Era* (London 1963) as part of the Thames and Hudson series *World of Art*.

8. M. Petrova, 'Desislava — La Joconde de Boiana', *Cahiers Européens*, 1 (1981) 73-74. Subsequently Petrova (1981).

9. V. Djuric, ed., *La peinture murale Serbe au XIII^e siècle* (Belgrade 1967).

10. O. Demus, 'Die Entstehung des Paleologenstils in der Malerei', *Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress*, IV 2 (Munich 1958) 8ff. and 'The style of the Kariye Djami and its place in the development of Paleologan art', ed. P. Underwood, in: *Kariye Djami*, IV (Princeton 1975) 109-160.

11. T. Velmans, *La peinture murale byzantine à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris 1977).

of Christ *Evergetes* in the naos of the old church at Boiana is found in the Deesis in the South Gallery at Haghia Sophia, which is accordingly dated to the end of the twelfth century. Consideration of the iconography of the St. Nicholas cycle by Nancy Ševčenko has been the most recent contribution to the historiography on Boiana but focusses on one aspect only of the programme belonging to the mid-thirteenth century at Boiana.¹²

It seems that despite the extensive bibliography which has by now been created, perception of these thirteenth-century wall paintings has become increasingly fragmented. Evaluations of the schemes in their entirety have been dogged by dichotomy concerning their importance in chronological assessments of the development of style during the period leading up to the Paleologan era, leading to confusing polarisation and illustrating the limitations of empiricist concerns and methods. This problem is largely due to the fact that there has been no radical reappraisal of the material itself nor any attempt to redefine the issues posed by Sebastokrator Kaloyan's patronage. More problematic is the lack of diversity in the methodological framework of art-historical scholarship of this period. The historiography of the wall paintings at Boiana underlines the limited scope for discussing this kind of material. As has already become apparent, discussion of Boiana's wall paintings is principally assessed in terms of its importance in relation to the centralising role attributed to Constantinople. Boiana's historiography reflects the shifts in importance accorded to regional distinctions conventionally accounted for in 'concepts of national stylistic 'schools'. This focusses on the fundamental dichotomy affecting perceptions of Boiana, as the wall paintings at Boiana have been assessed either as a Bulgarian achievement or as a mirror to Constantinople. The disregard of neighbouring Slav Bulgaria at the Conference of Sopočani illustrated an exclusive concept of nationalism, based on a political rather than cultural definition, which exposes the dangers of nationalism as a methodological basis for discussion. A closer examination of the historiography will illustrate these points.

12. N. Ševčenko, *The Life of St. Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Turin 1983) and subsequently Ševčenko (1983).

Scholarship on the subject of Boiana was initiated by Bogdan Filov, who was to become director of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute in 1924. The first approaches were therefore primarily archaeological and reports of the first excavations and research into the history of the site were published before the first World War.¹³ Examination of the architectural history of the church revealed that the east church of the dome in square plan was typical of the Middle Byzantine period and established that only the double storeyed narthex corresponded to the date of Kaloyan's inscription. The surviving wall paintings in the interiors of the enlarged church were accordingly attributed, with the exception of a few individual images, to the thirteenth-century donor's scheme of patronage. This material was then included in the first comprehensive history of Bulgarian art by Filov, *Ancien art bulgare*, published in Bern in 1919, and no doubt prompted Kondakov to comment, whilst visiting professor at the University of Sofia in 1920-1921, on the importance of the interiors at Boiana.¹⁴

This initial work on the monument was followed by André Grabar's *L'Eglise de Boiana*, which was also noteworthy for being the first monograph on a monument dating from the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople. As a systematic description of the content and sequence of the wall paintings from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, fully illustrated and catalogued, together with an outline of the history of repainting and restoration and supported by plans, sections and schematic diagrams, it is a model of a method which might now be described as 'antiquarian'. It requires updating only in the light of further sections of the thirteenth-century scheme discovered in the last fifteen years.¹⁵ The recent removal of the

13. B. Filov, 'Report during the restoration of 1911' (in Bulgarian), *Journal of the Bulgarian Archaeological Society* 3 (1911) 303; and 'Frescoes of the Boiana church in Sofia' (in Bulgarian), *Journal of the Bulgarian Archaeological Society* 5 (1915) 207-208.

14. Grabar (1924). Reference to Kondakov is made in the preface by Bogdan Filov. The material for Grabar's monograph was collected during the period he spent in Bulgaria from 1920 to 1922, after fleeing Bolshevik Russia, during which time he aided Filov in the task of compiling an inventory of medieval monuments in Bulgaria. Grabar's former teacher Kondakov also fled to Varna from Russia.

15. The edition of A. Grabar, *L'Eglise de Boiana*, by Naoka i Izkoustvo (Sofia 1978) republished the original text with colour plates prior to the significant findings in the last fifteen years.

dated fourteenth-century Presentation of the Virgin in the north arcosolium in the lower narthex revealing the thirteenth-century depiction of the same subject has recovered the content of Kaloyan's scheme in its entirety. Surviving fragments of painting in the upper narthex led to the recent discovery under whitewash of further sections of the original liturgical cycle in this upper chapel.¹⁶

It was fortunate for Boiana that the thirteenth-century wall paintings were to become an intrinsic part of Grabar's field of research during the formative years of this scholar. A dominant section of Grabar's doctoral thesis, *La peinture religieuse bulgare* published in Paris shortly after the monograph, is devoted to Boiana.¹⁷ Of the issues raised by Grabar, three predominate in subsequent considerations of the paintings. One is concerned with technique. Grabar was struck by what he considered to be an unusual method employed by the painter, which he ascribed to be derived from tempera painting on panel and which accounted for a blending of colour and tone giving an impression of spatial depth and modelling of form unusual in Byzantine art. Second is Grabar's stylistic appraisal of Boiana. Endorsed by the inscriptions in Old Slavonic and by affinities of Boiana's distinctive technique with wall painting of Turnovo, he presented Boiana as the apogee of a national school based in Turnovo, the medieval capital of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (c.1196-1393). A third issue concerns the Constantinopolitan and Western sources for features particular to Boiana. Grabar drew attention to the Constantinopolitan derivation of the epithets *Evergetes* and *Chalki* accompanying two images of Christ at Boiana and to the exclusively Constantinopolitan source of the Saving of St. Demetrius in the St. Nicholas cycle.¹⁸ The scene of the Miracle of the Carpet, unique in pictorial narratives but particular to Slav textual hagiography of this

16. L. Prashkov, 'Paintings of the XIIIth century in the upper floor of the Boiana church', in: *Medieval Bulgaria: in commemoration of the 70th birthday of Prof. I. Dujčev* (Sofia 1980) 323-335.

17. A. Grabar, *La peinture religieuse bulgare* (Paris 1928); subsequently Grabar (1928). Prefaced by Gabriel Millet, it was part of a series entitled *Orient et Byzance*.

18. The Christ *Evergetes* is situated on the north east wall of the naos in the eastern church. The Christ *Chalki* was located on the south east wall of the narthex, flanking the entrance to the older church (Diag. 2a).



Miracle at Sea, St. Nicholas cycle, lower narthex vault, church of St. Nicholas and St. Panteleimon, Boiana.

saint, was also found to derive from Constantinople. On the other hand, customs of secular life in the West were found to be the only parallel for other curious features at Boiana. The style of skull cap worn by a sailor and the display of shields on the stern of the vessel of Western design in the Miracle at Sea from the St. Nicholas cycle (Diag. 2a; plate 2) were traced by Grabar to naval custom of the

Crusaders from Italy and the singular gesture of the donor's spouse drawing the cords of her cloak with her right hand (Plate 1) was traced to chivalric fashions of the French court.¹⁹

Grabar situated the thirteenth-century schemes of wall painting at Boiana in the broader perception of Byzantine art held during the periods between the two world wars and presented them as a distinguished achievement of the Comnenian model with pronounced localised and topical features by a Slav nation. Whether in his general assessments or in his attention to detail, the scope of learning and perspicacity of a scholar so young is remarkable. One example is his explanation of an iconographical anomaly in the Anastasis at Boiana, recently overlooked in a study of this image, when his familiarity with Byzantine texts led him to identify, with reference to a manuscript in the Vatican, the unusual third king at Boiana as Melchisedech.²⁰

Two studies mark the culmination of attention given to Boiana's paintings during the period between the two world wars. One was by Mavrodinov, a Bulgarian, who discussed the particularities of Boiana in terms of Bulgarian characteristics in the context of the art of greater Macedonia.²¹ The other was by Philip Schweinfurth, a German, who focussed on discussing affinities between Boiana and western Gothic art.²² Since the Second World War, the painted interiors at Boiana have been the subject of more theoretically based approaches in Bulgarian scholarship. An architectural survey and a programme of conservation represent the anti-empirical aspirations of marxist scholarship during the 1950s.²³ The 1960s saw the development of more interpretative studies by socio-historical

19. For the colour reproduction of the scene Miracle at Sea, refer to K. Miyatev, *The Boyana Murals* (Sofia/Dresden 1961) pl.54.

20. Grabar (1928); the manuscript in question is Vatican Gr., Classic I, cod VIII 22, 5. The recent study referred to is A. Karlsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton 1986).

21. N. Mavrodinov, *The Church at Boiana and its Wall Paintings* (in Bulgarian) (Sofia 1943).

22. P. Schweinfurth, *Die Wandbilder der Kirche Boiana* (Berlin 1943).

23. G. Stoikov, *The Architecture of the Boiana Church* (Sofia 1954). Subsequently Stoikov (1954).

disciplines. The abundance of pictorial detail at Boiana relating particularly to costume and manners of the thirteenth century provided a much quoted source for comment on material culture of medieval daily life. The exquisite precision to detail in the depiction of the ceremonial robes and insignia of office worn by the donor and his wife portrayed in the church was often illustrated to epitomise the development of realism in medieval art. The results of these approaches are often regrettably superficial, hampered to a certain extent, no doubt, by having to conform to prescribed political ideologies. With few exceptions, the courtly art of Boiana was felt to be a less deserving subject for Bulgarian scholarship than other schemes of wall painting from the medieval period in Bulgaria.²⁴ A timely corrective measure is the forthcoming conference in Sofia to mark the seventieth anniversary of the publication of Grabar's monograph on Boiana.²⁵

The appraisals of Boiana's wall paintings by Kristo Miyatev and Kiril Krustev are, however, noteworthy exceptions in the post-war period.²⁶ Published simultaneously, their contrasting views reflect the characteristic polarity in perceptions of Boiana. The interest of these appraisals lies also in the manner in which art-historical interpretations can be conditioned by ambitious concepts of nationalism, characteristic of Communist ideologies, which endeavoured to enhance the Bulgarian contribution to cultural history on a European scale.²⁷

Miyatev and Krustev shared the same platform in attaching importance to the painter's observation of the material world and his capacity for rendering the human condition. These empirical observations were then advanced in the service of this modern concept of nationalism

24. I. Akrobova-Zandova, *The Boiana Church* (in Bulgarian) (Sofia 1960); D. Panayotova, *The Thirteenth-Century Wall Paintings at Boiana* (in Bulgarian) (Sofia 1966); I. Genova, *The Boiana church and its paintings* (in Bulgarian) (Sofia 1974).

25. Under the auspices of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

26. K. Krustev & V. Zahariev (1961) and also K. Krustev 'L'apport bulgare dans les peintures murales de Boiana', ed. D. Kartalev, *La culture médiévale bulgare* (Sofia 1964), 57-69; K. Miyatev, *The Boyana Murals* (Sofia/Dresden 1961). Subsequently Miyatev (1961).

27. M. Stancheva, ed., *The Bulgarian Contribution to the World Cultural Heritage* (Sofia 1989) includes L. Koinov Arnaudova & V. Kitov, *The Boiana Church*. Subsequently Stancheva (1989).

to illustrate the importance of Bulgaria in the subsequent development of Byzantine and Western art. Miyatev claims to regard Boiana's wall paintings as precursors of Paleologan art, but in some respects argues against himself by discussing Boiana's relationship with the eleventh- and twelfth-century precedent. Krustev's view is vigorously argued and he constructs a case for the importance of Boiana on a European scale. Viewing the paintings at Boiana as incomparable in the development of wall painting from Nerezi (1164) in the Comnenian period to the Chora monastery (1303) of the Paleologan era, he measures this achievement as the culmination of Comnenian classicism, reviving the model current during the inter-wars of Grabar.²⁸ On the other hand, he claimed that Boiana's paintings represented as great an artistic achievement as the masters of the Renaissance, Giotto, Masaccio and Leonardo, whom they also anticipated. In addition, the importance he attached to the secular realism at Boiana was employed to undermine the determining influence of the Christian Church and to promote the Bulgarian nation. For Krustev, it was the Bogomil tradition which accounted for the degree of individualisation and portraiture at Boiana.

Whilst on the subject of nationalist propaganda, it is also worth commenting on the work of Galabov, whose comprehensive study of the inscriptions has not been superseded.²⁹ Discussed within the parameters of this ideology, the use of inscriptions in Old Slavonic accompanying the paintings with the exception of the St. Nicholas cycle, was presented as the reflection of a conscious desire to be differentiated from Greek and as material evidence of the Bulgarian nationality of the painter. Owing, however, to the compromising political basis of the methodological approach, these appraisals of the wall paintings at Boiana do little to develop art-historical discourse.

The most significant recent contribution to the historiography of Boiana's wall paintings is Ševčenko's consideration of the St. Nicholas cycle.³⁰ By focusing on purely iconographical issues, the discussion

28. The source quoted is A. Heisenberg, 'Das Problem der Renaissance in Byzanz', *Historische Zeitschrift* 133 (1926).

29. I. Galabov, *Die Inschriften an der Wandmalerei der Kirche in Boiana* (Sofia 1963).

30. Ševčenko (1983).

avoids the dichotomy which has beset stylistic assessments but does not escape from the problem of Boiana's connection with Western art. Similarities in pictorial composition with Duocento painting and possible textual sources in Latin are mentioned which warrant further investigation. The importance of this narrative of the saint's life at Boiana as the most extensive cycle before the later sixteenth-century cult of St. Nicholas is clearly set into perspective and one of the more interesting issues raised is the use of textual sources. The use of tenth-century narratives of the saint's life embellished with additional events, which is to become a characteristic feature of cycles in the Balkans, accounts for the unprecedented and unique scene of the Miracle of the Carpet at Boiana and points to a potentially rewarding field of research.

The wall paintings at Boiana now present themselves as a prime candidate for more theoretical approaches, the results of which promise to be valuable not only for developing an understanding of this particular monument, but also for broadening the perception of Byzantine art at this period. The accelerated deterioration of their condition which repeated programmes of conservation seem powerless to redress adds urgency to their re-evaluation.

In considering how the problems of Boiana may be treated in the future, one notable feature of the historiography of these wall paintings is their isolation in the context of medieval art. Boiana's position in relation to mural painting of the thirteenth century in Bulgaria is sorely in need of examination. The concept of the School of Turnovo has been a much used model for discussions of art during this period, unsuccessfully countered by an attempt to identify Boiana more closely with early thirteenth-century painting in the south-west of Bulgaria, a region which was to affect the later development of painting in Turnovo.³¹ The vulnerability of stylistic categorisations is exposed by subsequent redefinitions of the School of Turnovo, which has lately been extended to embrace painting of the period as a whole.³² The attribution of more material to this period has renewed the context

31. A. Protič, 'Le style de l'école de la peinture murale de Turnovo au XIII^{ème} et XIV^{ème} siècles', *Recueil Uspensky* I (Paris 1930) 92-101.

32. A. Boschkov, *The Turnovo School* (in Bulgarian) (Sofia 1985).

for reassessing Boiana in relation to painting in Bulgaria, which will in turn have a bearing on the School of Turnovo, itself conceptually open to revision.³³

The enigma surrounding the thirteenth-century patron has so far not been elucidated, but this need not be a cause for frustration for the art-historian. No further documentation of the princely patronage of the church has, unfortunately, been traced in medieval writing and although the representation of the donor is inscribed in Old Slavonic with the high ranking title Sebastokrator and with the name Kaloyan, his identity has not been established, despite the information given concerning his claimed genealogy.³⁴ His wife is named by inscription Desislava, but she also remains otherwise unattested. The closest attempt to date to identify the donor was made by the historian Zlatarski, who postulated that the patron was the Kaloyan, chronicled by Akropolite as the supporter of the usurper king Constantine Tich, who was brutally murdered in 1257.³⁵ This, he held, accounted for the lack of any trace of burial in the arcosolia at Boiana and led him to conclude that it was the king portrayed at Boiana who had been responsible for completing the painted decoration in the church in 1259, anonymously in honour of his loyal subject. Without conclusive evidence, however, Zlatarski's theory has not been accepted. Anyone bearing the title Sebastokrator was, as will be seen, closely associated with the monarch and whether it was Kaloyan, or the king himself, who was responsible for completing the painted schemes is of secondary importance when assessing the paintings as an integrated programme commemorating a prominent national figure. The lack of documentation on Boiana is only partially accountable for the perception of these mural paintings as unique in terms of style, content and quality and attempts to integrate the schemes at Boiana with wall painting of the period should not disregard the level of psychological

33. L. Mavrodinov, 'L'Ecole de peinture de Turnovo à la lumière des recherches récentes', *JÖB* 32/5 (1982) 225-229.

34. I. Dujčev, 'The Boiana church in the scientific literature (in Bulgarian)' *Journal of the Institute of Plastic Arts* 6 (1963) 23-46.

35. V. Zlatarski, 'The Boiana Inscription', *Journal of the Historico-philosophical faculty, University of Sofia*, XXXI 10 (1935) 3-28 and reprinted in V. Zlatarski, *Collected Works*, II (Sofia 1984).

sensitivity and technical skill which differentiate them as an exceptional achievement of artistic creativity.

The matter of the painter's technique deserves clarification. Warnings against drawing conclusions about the original binding medium from scenes which had subsequently been restored with oil have been articulated and analysis of the painting in the upper church whose surviving state may be closer to the medieval original is yet to be undertaken.³⁶ Opinion is divided concerning the authorship of the paintings and some claim to have identified 'signatures' indicative of at least two painters.³⁷ The degree of homogeneity in conception apparent throughout the thirteenth-century schemes reflects a conceptual coherence which has led to the popular appellation of the Boiana Master.³⁸ This is, however, ambiguous when the issue of a singular or collective identity for this master is pressed further.³⁹ The relatively small scale of the interiors makes the hypothesis of a single painter feasible, but the marked differences in style and iconography, together with the lack of inscriptions, of the St. Nicholas cycle make the identification of a different painter, in this scheme at least, arguable.

One of the most pressing needs is to restore a sense of proportion to the question of cultural exchange at Boiana and to introduce a perspective which will release the potential interest of this issue. The visual affinity with Duocento painting has marked the perception of the art at Boiana since its inception. Indeed, the first published description of the paintings dating from the middle of the nineteenth century by the Czech historian Ireček records how he was struck by their resemblance with Giotto.⁴⁰ As has been seen, Grabar dwelt at length on identifying the foreign sources for unusual features at Boiana and made this the subject of his contribution to the first volume of *Byzantion*.⁴¹

36. Lazarev (1967).

37. Grabar (1924), 13, 20, 25; on indistinct 'signatures', Miyatev (1961), 9 note 1; and L. Koinova Arnaudova, *The Boiana Church*, ed. M. Stancheva (Sofia 1989) 128.

38. Petrova (1981).

39. Grabar (1924).

40. K. Ireček, *Voyages à travers la Bulgarie (1879-1884)* (Plovdiv 1899).

41. A. Grabar, 'Un reflet du monde Latin dans une peinture balkanique du XIII^e siècle', *B I* (1924) 229-243.

Shortly after, Ainalov discussed stylistic affinities which could be drawn between Boiana and painting of the Duocento and this issue has even been exploited, as has been noted, for purposes of propaganda.⁴²

The Western and Constantinopolitan elements in the painted schemes at Boiana do indeed make the issue of cultural exchange and dissemination central to Boiana and the methodological approaches which have recently been introduced to discussions of this subject make renewed consideration of this at Boiana particularly opportune. In addition to the features ascribed to western sources identified by Grabar, of which the depiction of a vessel of western military design in the scene of the Miracle at Sea is strangely apt, there are iconographic and stylistic elements which the paintings at Boiana have in common with the corpus of mural and panel painting designated in the post-war period as 'Crusader' art. The affinities at Boiana are found to be most concentrated in the St. Nicholas cycle. A subject characteristic in the imagery from the mixed cultural context of this period is the legend of the boy captured by the Saracens and restored to his Christian family on the island of Mytelene which, as has been shown in relation to the icon of St. George in the British Museum, features in the hagiography of both St. George and St. Nicholas during the period of the Fourth Crusade.⁴³ The same textual source probably accounts for its presence at Boiana.⁴⁴ Importance was attached to this episode at Boiana, as it is set apart from the rest of the cycle on the vault and situated prominently in the vertical lunette above the west door (Diag. 2b).

The number of references in each of the schemes of wall painting at Boiana to Constantinople reflect the extent to which the imperial Byzantine capital in Latin control remained a focal point for the Orthodox world. At the same time, the discovery of Latin painting in Constantinople attributed to the 1250s now provides a real model

42. D. Ainalov, 'The mural painting of Boiana' (in Russian), *Journal of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute* 4 (1926-27) 121-134; subsequently Ainalov (1926-27).

43. R. Cormack & S. Mihalarias, 'A Crusader painting of St. George: "maniera greca" or "lingua franca"?' *Burlington Magazine* 126 (March 1984) 132-141.

44. Ševčenko (1983).

of Western activity in the city.⁴⁵ The similarity in the treatment of facial features of one of the sailors in the Miracle at Sea with that of a Franciscan monk is particularly striking.⁴⁶

The image of artistic activity and of cultural exchange in Latin Constantinople which is reflected at Boiana makes a significant contribution to perceptions of artistic production during this period. They testify to the regard in which Eastern conventions and Western practice were held in geographical regions outside Latin administration and question the validity of colonialisation and of categorical distinctions like 'Crusader art'.⁴⁷ Many of the observations on the deep rooted resilience of the Byzantine idiom in a mixed cultural context voiced in connection with the thirteenth-century paintings from Lysi in Cyprus can be echoed with regard to Boiana in the Balkans.⁴⁸ The appropriation at Boiana of recognisably Western elements is little more than accessory and the example of Boiana demonstrates the diversity of cultural intermingling of the period which is now being made apparent.

In addition, the elements of style and iconography at Boiana which are unprecedented in the Byzantine tradition demonstrate the capacity of the visual tradition of the Orthodox Church to respond to its impermanent context. The Eastern contribution to the history of portraiture in Europe in particular is called into review by the exceptional degree of individualisation at Boiana.

The issue of cultural exchange at Boiana is not merely confined to issues of assimilation between East and West. The appropriation of Slav elements into the Greek tradition is equally prominent at

45. C. Striker & Y. Kuban Doğan, 'Report on excavations at Kalenderhane Camii', *DOP* 22 (1968) 185-193; C. Striker, 'Crusader painting in Constantinople: findings at Kalenderhane', in: *Il Medio Oriente e l'Occidente nell'arte del XIII secolo*, ed. H. Belting (Bologna 1982) 117-121.

46. For photographic reproduction of the Franciscan cycle, refer to C. Striker & K. Doğan, 'Report on excavations at Kalenderhane Camii', *DOP* 22 (1968) fig.24. For the detail of the Miracle at Sea, refer to L. Koinova Arnaudova & V. Kitov, *The Boiana Church*, ed. M. Stancheva (Sofia 1989) 148.

47. A recent study of relations between Bulgaria and Latin Constantinople relevant to this aspect is A. Danceva Vasileva, *Bulgaria and the Latin Empire 1204-1261* (in Bulgarian) (Sofia 1985).

48. A. Weyl Carr & L. Morrocco, *A Byzantine Masterpiece Recovered. The Thirteenth-Century Murals of Lysi, Cyprus* (Austin 1991).

Boiana. The use of inscriptions in Old Slavonic and depictions of local saints, which will be discussed more fully, are equally interesting in illustrating the process whereby a distinctive cultural identity was defined at Boiana.

It is now appropriate to outline an approach to Boiana which may initiate fresh perspectives on the paintings. The confrontational implications of cultural exchange can be avoided at Boiana by focusing on patronage, a method which has proved fruitful in relation to understanding the mixed cultural elements in the decoration of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.⁴⁹ Although the patronage of Sebastokrator Kaloyan at Boiana does not reflect the cultural complexity of the inter-denominational patronage of the church in Bethlehem, the internal schemes of Boiana and Bethlehem share a common genesis, in that they were both determined by the culturally privileged for a universal audience. Focusing on the methods employed by Kaloyan to direct to the medieval viewer the content of the painted cycles in his sepulchral monument offers a fresh premise from which to restore coherence amongst the diverse elements of these schemes. The survival of the material evidence almost in its entirety endorses such an approach.

The information given in the donor's inscription permits the reconstruction in the abstract of this elusive patron as a significant political and social figure of his day and authorises us to postulate his intentions.⁵⁰ The title *sebastokrator* concurs with the donor's twofold royal claims, on the one hand for lineage from the founder of the Serbian dynasty, Stefan Nemanja, and on the other for his connection with the usurper Bulgarian king, Constantine Tich. During the collapse of Imperial authority, the title is frequently encountered in the Balkans indicating that the practice of designating the title by the emperor to members of his family was adopted by the newly established local monarchies.⁵¹ The scale of the donor portraits equal to that of the

49. L.A. Hunt, 'Art and Colonialism. The Mosaics of the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem (1169) and the problem of "Crusader Art"', *DOP* 45 (1991) 69-85. The same approach is also found in L.A. Hunt, 'A Woman's prayer to St. Sergius in Latin Syria. Interpreting a thirteenth-century icon at Mt. Sinai', *BMGS* 15 (1991) 96-145.

50. See note 2.

51. E. Savčeva, 'Particularités étatiques et juridiques du titre *Sebastokrator* en Bulgarie durant la période XIII-XIVe siècles', *Études Balkaniques* 3 (1979) 53-71. Subsequently Savčeva (1979).

Bulgarian king and queen and their location directly opposite the royal couple by the entrance from the narthex to the older church can be interpreted as a visual expression of the *Sebastokrator's* claim for parity with the Bulgarian monarchy (Diag. 2a). The appointment was indicative, in some instances, of a considerable degree of independent authority and financial resources. An architectural precedent for Boiana is the double storeyed church within the fortress at Stanimaka dated by inscription 1231, at the time a *Sebastokrator* Alexis was appointed to consolidate the authority of the Asen monarchy over the local mixed Bulgarian and Greek population. It is therefore easy to see how Marxist ideology made much of the elitist aspect of *Sebastokrator* Kaloyan's status and his monument as representative of the institutions of feudalism. Sensitive to the individual nature of this patronage, Ševčenko suggested that the St. Nicholas cycle could be read as a spiritual allegory of the donor's temporal achievements.⁵² In no other treatment of the saint's life is so much attention given to depicting episodes concerned with intervention, in particular the saint's intercession with Ablabius and with the Emperor Constantine himself on behalf of three victimised generals.

Once again, such views need to be qualified in the light of the material evidence. Beside underlining the donor's pedigree, the wording of the inscription lays greater emphasis on piety, both of *Sebastokrator* Kaloyan and of the Bulgarian monarch. As a patron of the church, Kaloyan secured for himself and his wife the privileges of a donor, valued as guarantees for their spiritual salvation.⁵³ The most important privileges were perpetual commemoration in an obituary register, burial within the church and inclusion in the iconography of the church's decoration. The surviving Boiana Screeed is evidence of the implementation of the first privilege.⁵⁴ The *arcosolia* in the donor's narthex denote the intention of the second and the legacy of the remarkable donor portraits are testimony of the implementation of the third privilege. That Kaloyan's patronage was conceived primarily to testify to his piety is borne out by the

52. Ševčenko (1983).

53. Savčeva (1979).

54. M. Stancheva, 'Marginal notes of the Boiana Screeed' (in Bulgarian), *Journal of Bulgarian History* 26 (1968) 311-319.

design of the architectural addition he made to the original church.

In choosing to adopt the plan of a double storeyed structure enclosing a church above a sepulchral vault, Kaloyan employed a form of Early Christian burial place which was revived in Bulgarian lands by prominent local figures from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries for their personal commemoration.⁵⁵ The earliest precedent is at Bačkov, where the Armenian governor of Emperor Alexius Comnenus had built, at the end of the eleventh century, a double storeyed basilican plan ossuary with a funerary chapel over. The iconography of Kaloyan's upper church at Boiana follows the same pattern as that at Bačkov, particularly in the location of a Deesis group in the apse. The most immediate precedent for the double storeyed plan at Boiana is Stanimaka. As the internal decoration of Stanimaka has been lost, the painted schemes at Boiana are therefore unique in representing the culminating instance of an architectural type designed for an individual's commemoration particular to Bulgaria.

The architectural arrangement of Kaloyan's Boiana distinguishes this example of commemorative building from the others of this type and denotes a unique functional flexibility, accommodating public as well as private devotion. Entry to all three upper churches was through a door at that level in the south wall, reached by an external wooden staircase such as is visible in the donor's model at Boiana (Plate 1). Access was presumably restricted to the personal use of the donor. At Boiana, the original church on the site is incorporated into the donor's scheme and is approached solely through the lower chamber of the new narthex. As a result of this design, the chamber intended as the donor's sepulchral vault was also accessible to the greatest number of people. In discussions of the thirteenth-century schemes of painting at Boiana, it therefore seems appropriate to remember the medieval viewer for whom they were determined and to account for the iconographic programme accordingly.

The similarity of the arrangement of a secluded chamber above a sepulchral vault, typical of this Bulgarian type of commemorative

55. A. Grabar, 'Églises sépulchrales bulgares', *Journal of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute* 1 (1923) 105-135.

architecture, with that of the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos on Cyprus is striking.⁵⁶ Whereas self sanctification can be taken as the principal objective of monk Neophytos in creating a shrine on the site of his monastic community, the circumstances of Boiana reflect spiritual aspirations of a more secularised nature and context. In addition to the secular status of the door, the church at Boiana was presumably enclosed within a defensive complex, similar to the fortress at Stanimaka, although the precise nature of the surrounding buildings has not been established.⁵⁷ The prominence given to material detail and secular figures in Kaloyan's painted cycles emphasises the donor's temporal status and this example of self-commemoration is to be associated with portrayals of donors rather than sanctification.

As identified in the architectural form and expressed in the donor's inscription, the concern to proclaim the donor's devotion to the Church can be seen as the principle governing the selection of imagery and the disposition of the painted cycles functioning in accordance with their architectural location but the question as to how far the painter was involved or responsible for devising the scheme is an issue for separate consideration. The evidence of a painted programme devised to be integrated in a specifically designed architectural setting argues strongly in favour of the patron as the determining element of the whole scheme. Similarly, the presence of particularly Bulgarian or Slav features at Boiana cannot be taken as evidence of the painter or painters' nationality. The theme of piety which links the various cycles is taken, therefore, as one level of interpretation of the paintings, which as indicated by the donor's inscription, he consciously intended.

Kaloyan's iconographic programme gives considerable prominence to aspects of the christian faith particular to the Early Church in Constantinople. These have been quoted in allegations of archaism at Boiana. On the other hand, when viewed in terms of Kaloyan's personal profession of faith, the advantages of referring to the orthodoxy of the Early Church are understood if he is seen as a

56. C. Galatariotou, *The Making of a Saint: the Life, Times and Sanctification of Neophytos the Recluse* (Cambridge 1991).

57. Stoikov (1954). The existence of a royal palace is maintained in local lore: Grabar (1924) and Miyatev (1961).

member of the newly autocephalous Church in Bulgaria anxious to establish its theological credentials through his personal example. The same intention can also explain the quotations at Boiana from tenth- and eleventh-century sources, used as suitable precedents from the post-Iconoclastic period for the visual imagery chosen by the new Bulgarian church. Furthermore, the noticeable presence of particularly Bulgarian or Slav elements can be seen as instruments in a visual language devised by Kaloyan to illustrate his piety and the validity of the Orthodox faith to local viewers.

Looking at the disposition of the painted schemes in greater detail, it is noticeable that the cycle in the original church is chiefly intended to acknowledge the doctrinal Feasts of the Orthodox church and to honour Christ's incarnation. The manner too respected tradition as Kaloyan's scheme seems to have abided closely with the Byzantine precedent. The Church Fathers in the apse adhere to the outlines of the standing figures belonging to the earlier scheme, which can be seen underneath. The homage paid by Kaloyan to Helen and Constantine and to the warrior saints express, in that chamber, the honour accorded to the founders and defenders of the Orthodox church.

The reoccurring indication of the Constantinopolitan derivation for the iconography reflects the donor's desire to acknowledge the Byzantine capital as the seat of Orthodoxy. Occupying a place of honour on the north side of the templon, an image of Christ can be seen to convey the magnitude of Kaloyan's devotion to the Church. Inscribed *Evergetes*, the enthroned Christ is an anomaly in the typography of this image derived from a lost prototype in the eponymous monastery in Constantinople.⁵⁸ The replication on a monumental scale at Boiana of a Constantinopolitan icon reputedly associated with benefaction can leave no doubt of Sebastokrator Kaloyan's desire for his patronage of the church to be associated with the attributes of the Byzantine image.

The celebration of the donor's benefaction seen in the *ktetoric* function of the image of Christ *Evergetes* can also be discerned in

58. Grabar (1928); A. Cutler, 'The Dumbarton Oaks Psalter and the New Testament. The iconography of the Moscow Leaf', *DOP* 37 (1983) 35-45.

another image of Christ at Boiana, usually discussed together on account of their presumed Constantinopolitan sources (Diag. 2a). This is the representation of Christ, inscribed *Chalki* on the south east wall of the narthex, of which only fragments of the facial features of the standing figure survive. It is one example of the revival of the historic image from the Chalki Gate which is encountered at this period. There is no reason why the *ktetoric* function ascribed to this image in Metochites' church of the Chora monastery and, perhaps more significantly, to Vladislav Nemanja's donor portrait at Mileševa may not be extended to Boiana's Christ *Chalki*.⁵⁹ As at Boiana this image is situated adjacent to the portraits of the king and queen, the *ktetoric* associations are imparted to the royal couple. In view of this, the topical significance which the image of the Christ *Chalki* came to have as a symbol of the Imperial court in exile at Nicaea is also relevant.⁶⁰ The usurper king of Bulgaria, Constantine Tich owed his right to use the dynastic name of Asen through marriage in 1257 with an imperial princess, Irene, the granddaughter of Iven II Asen and the daughter of the emperor Theodor Laskaris. The emphasis given to the preservation of orthodoxy already identified as a fundamental iconographic principle at Boiana is again intended in the function of this image. The role of imperial authority in defending images, which was measured in the vicissitudes of the image Christ above the Chalki Gate during the Iconoclast controversy, is ascribed at Boiana to the royal couple in relation to Bulgarian Church. The figures of Constantine and Helena in the older church, already discussed, are indicative of this medieval concept of kingship and there are other features in the imagery at Boiana which offer visual evidence of the cult of Constantine associated with the Bulgarian king being intensified during the period following the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in 1204.⁶¹

59. C. Mango, *The Brazen House. A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen 1959).

60. Grabar (1928); P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, 3 vols. (Washington D.C. 1966, 1968, 1973).

61. F. Badalanova-Pokrovskaja, M.B. Plohanova, 'Medieval Symbols and Power: the cult of Constantine and vulgate traditions' (in Russian), *Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis* 781 (1987) 132-148.

The presence of the Christ *Chalki* at Boiana can also be seen as an early indication of the awareness of this image which is prominent in Slav chronicles of the following century.⁶² Flanking the entrance to the original church at Boiana, the Christ *Chalki* could replicate the image which, according to one understanding of some of these Slav accounts, was set above the west entrance to Hagia Sophia.

The iconography of the Presentation of the Virgin belonging to Kaloyan's scheme, recently discovered in the north arcosolia of narthex, exemplifies the regard for tenth- and eleventh-century precedent characteristic of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. The inclusion at Boiana of the related episode of the Feeding of the Virgin by the Angel is of the same iconographic type as found at Dafni and in Basil II's Menologion.⁶³ The Menologion from the church of the Forty Martyrs in Turnovo of 1230, the first known visual rendering of the Constantinopolitan liturgical calendar, may accordingly suggest the channel for this at Boiana and this, in turn, offers a new premise from which to examine the relationship between Boiana and Turnovo.

The creation of a visual language specifically directed to a local audience is most overt in the cycles of the lower narthex. Here, the portrayals of the donor and his wife, together with those of the Bulgarian king and queen, stand at the head of a frieze of important figures in the history of Christianity, processing from the western entrance and culminating at the doorway in the east to the older church (Diag. 2a&b). The selection of figures gives prominence to aspects of orthodox religion characteristic among Slav peoples and, in some instances, reflects aspects which were seen to be special by the Bulgarian nation. This can be observed in the first two figures *orante* flanking the entrance to the chamber. One is St. Barbara, one of the first female martyrs, honoured as a deaconess denoted by the yellow sash over her robe. The other, inscribed in old Bulgarian St. Nedelia, the word for Sunday, is a personification of Sunday and is interesting for suggesting the degree of independence taken by the Bulgarian church in matters of theological debate concerning the orthodox world.

62. G.P. Majeska, 'The Image of the Chalke Saviour in St. Sophia', *BS* 32 (1971) 284-295.

63. J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'Iconography of the Life of the Virgin', in: P. Underwood, ed., *Kariye Djami*, IV (New York 1975) 161-194.

Ainalov's observation that this image is unique in Byzantine iconography has not been refuted.⁶⁴ He accounts for this image at Boiana as a visual expression of the argument which obviously found favour in Bulgaria countering the medieval controversy about idolatry and the function of images arising from differing interpretations of the Church Fathers. The counter argument in favour of personifications had recourse to models in the Constantinian Church. The personification of Sunday was the visual counterpart to the preservation of the seventh day of the week for celebration of the Resurrection, as prescribed by Constantinian ordinances aimed at syncretising philosophical and religious concepts of Antiquity with Christianity and Ainalov stresses the predilection for visual personifications in the iconography of the Slav people. It should be added that the etymological derivation for the Bulgarian word *nedelia*: ne = no; delo = work, corroborates Ainalov's view and sustains the presence of this iconographical originality at Boiana.

This iconographical convention typical of the Slavs occurs again in the same programme at Boiana, this time in relation to the embodiment of Good Friday. A figure inscribed St. Paraskeva is situated in the arch of the north arcosolia (Diag. 2a). Placed above an intended sepulchre, this implies the iconographic role referring to the Resurrection which had been attributed to the pious Paraskeva of the Early Church in the second century. Yet again at Boiana, models of the Early Church are invested with a contemporary dimension, for Kaloyan's Paraskeva is probably the first visual representation of a tenth-century figure bearing the same name, who was to become a symbol of collective Slav identity during the later Ottoman rule. The cult of the medieval St. Paraskeva was largely created in the Second Bulgarian Kingdom.⁶⁵ After gaining mastery of Thrace by his victory over the imperial Byzantine claimant, Theodor Komnenos Dukas, at the battle of Kolkotnica in 1230, King Ivan II Asen had translated with great ceremony the miraculous relics of Paraskeva from her birthplace Epibatai, a day's journey west of Constantinople,

64. Ainalov (1926-27).

65. I. Dujčev, *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* X (Rome 1961-1970) 331-333; E. Bakalova, 'La vie de St. Paraskeva de Tirnovu dans l'art balkanique du Bas Moyen Age', *Byzantino bulgarica* 5 (1978) 175-211.

to a shrine in the Tsarevets at Turnovo. Subsequently, Patriarch Euthymius was entrusted with the task of compiling the Life of Paraskeva, or Petka in Slavonic, drawing on earlier hagiography in Slavonic.

Next in the historical progression of pious figures comes the representation of St. John of Rila (Diag. 2b). Pendant to St. Paraskeva, in the arch of the south arcosolium, this is the earliest known visual representation of this early tenth-century hermit and founder of the great eponymous monastery in Bulgaria. Clearly, he is ranked as the Bulgarian counterpart of the ascetic saints and founders of monasticism of the Orthodox church, St. Ephraim, St. Theodor Studion and St. Catherine, with whom he is honoured at Boiana. The representations of St. Paraskeva and of St. John of Rila are visual statements of Bulgaria's contribution to the cult of saints in the medieval period, developed by the Asen dynasty at Turnovo, and established their respective iconic typography.

The donor's spiritual pedigree is further endorsed by images of figures of piety from more recent medieval history. St. Sava, the youngest son of the founder of the Serbian dynasty from whom Sebastokrator Kaloyan claims descent and the first patriarch of the autocephalous church in Serbia, is commemorated, as he is frequently in Serbian church decoration, in the narthex at Boiana (Diag. 2b). Sava is also credited with having secured the Patriarchate's recognition of the Orthodox church in Bulgaria as autocephalous and died in Turnovo on his return from the East in 1235. The donor's portrait, with that of his wife, and the royal couple, conclude the procession of piety at Boiana. Situated on either side of the entrance into the old church, with painstaking attention to depicting the opulence of their regalia and ceremonial robes of office, they function in the tradition of Imperial portraiture, clearly intended to impress the faithful passing through the sepulchral vault to the old church (Diag. 2a; plate 1).

The focus of Christian worship and of national identity which the church at Boiana appears to have served during later periods, both during and after Ottoman rule, testifies to the effectiveness of Kaloyan's pictorial schemes in expressing the personal and public aspirations of a donor in a local context and suggests yet another

perspective for further study. Boiana remains the only relatively intact monument of its kind from this period and the special place it holds in the nation's cultural awareness appears to have a relatively consistent tradition. Once again, documentary sources on the history of the church at Boiana after 1259 are sparse. In the mid-fourteenth century, the lunettes above the arcosolia appear to have been painted. The recently removed Presentation of the Virgin accompanied by the name of the donor, Ivanko, has survived.⁶⁶ The other survives only in Ireček's description of a fresco accompanied by an inscription dated 1346 and stating the donor's name as Aldimir. During the Ottoman occupation, the Sebastokrator's residence is presumed to have been destroyed and the church appears to have been maintained by the local community.⁶⁷ Images of Christ and of the patron saint St. Nicholas are attributed on the basis of style to the fifteenth century and indicate continued Christian activity in the church.⁶⁸ This is also the earliest period in which the original medieval screed was transcribed into its surviving form.⁶⁹ Subsequent marginal notes relate to the maintenance of the fabric of the church by the local community, which nevertheless was described as abandoned by the Russian Gregorovič in 1844.⁷⁰

What prompted renewed attention to the church and to the site at Boiana in the mid-nineteenth century has not been precisely identified, but according to Ireček it was after 1845 that the exonarthex was added. This structure which dwarfs the medieval church seems to have been constructed with the intention of reversing the medieval plan of the church. The exonarthex permits direct access to Kaloyan's upper chapel, dispensing with the private access of the external staircase and rendering the door in the south wall obsolete. The dome

66. Grabar (1924) 28.

67. K. Miyatev, 'Some new aspects on the history of the Boiana church' (in Bulgarian), *Archaeologia* 2 (1963) 23-28.

68. Grabar (1924) 83.

69. V. Gregorovič, *Notes on Travels in the European Part of Turkey 1845* (in Russian), (Moscow 1877) 136-157 records finding manuscripts buried in the walls of the lower narthex and the removal of part of the screed to the Rumyantsov Monastery, Moscow. Stancheva ascribes the transposition of the original medieval screed to the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

70. See note above.

of the upper church was raised and the interior decorated by painters from Samokov, a prominent cultural centre during the period of the Bulgarian National Revival. Following the liberation from Ottoman rule, the royal and donor portraits were celebrated in copies made in 1878 by a painter from another cultural centre, Triavna, and an inscription dated 1882 points to further regard for the preservation of the church. A certain romanticism became inherent in the perception of the history of the site during the post liberation period, exemplified by Ivan Vazov's celebration, in his essay *The Sofia Valley*, of its legendary past as the site of the ancient capital making a desolate comparison with its present stature, despite the sixty five houses recorded in the village in 1873.⁷¹ The burial at Boiana in 1917, on her instruction, of Eleanora, second wife of King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, whose coronations in Turnovo in 1908 had been devised to emulate the splendour of Imperial Byzantium, reflects the renown of Boiana as a symbol of national identity.⁷² Kaloyan's wall paintings at Boiana offer material with which to investigate the regard for the medieval period during the nineteenth century and how this affected the development of national consciousness. The role of Boiana in the history of the Bulgarian National revival is yet to be written.

Courtauld Institute, London

71. P. Dimitrov, 'Seven centuries of the Boiana frescoes' (in Bulgarian), *Spiritual Culture* 9 (1959) 1-7.

72. S. Constant, *Foxy Ferdinand, Tsar of Bulgaria* (London 1978).

Philosophical, historical and sensual: an examination of Cavafy's thematic collections

ANTHONY HIRST

Introduction

Between 1905 and his death in 1933 Cavafy circulated a total of seven thematic collections of his poems, as well as five chronological collections. In the latter the poems are arranged in the order in which they were first published, so that it is perfectly clear in what sense the chronological collections are chronological. The aim of this investigation is to determine in what sense the thematic collections are thematic: to attempt to disclose through a close scrutiny of the collections the principles on which they are constructed.

Savidis' 1963 edition of Cavafy's collected poems was the first commercial edition to present the poet's work more or less in the form in which he himself had been distributing it during the last years of his life. It restores Cavafy's chronological divisions of the poems and his sequencing within those divisions, in contrast to the somewhat inaccurate single chronological sequence by publication date of the earlier commercial editions from 1935 onwards. The first volume¹ consists of three groups of poems distinguished chronologically: '1905-1915' (40 poems), '1916-1918' (28 poems) and '1896-1904' (16 poems). Allocation of poems to these groups is by date of first publication, but within each of these groups the arrangement of the poems is not chronological but thematic; and the arrangement (with some qualification in relation to the third group) is Cavafy's. The first two groups correspond exactly to the last two thematic collections issued by Cavafy.

1. The second volume, headed *1919-1933*, corresponds to the latest form (see Note 9 below) of Cavafy's last chronological collection, i.e. *Poems 1919-1932* (in which the poems are arranged in order of first publication), with the addition of Cavafy's last poem, "Εἰς τὰ περίχωρα τῆς Ἀντιοχείας", which he had prepared for the printers before his death.

For reference I list here the seven thematic collections with the dates of first issue in brackets:

1. *Poems 1904* (1905)
2. *Poems 1910* (1910)
3. *Poems 1909-1911* (1917)
4. *Poems 1908-1914* (1920)
5. *Poems 1907-1915* (1926)
6. *Poems 1916-1918* (1929)
7. *Poems 1905-1915* (1930)

These seven collections may in a sense be reduced to three (Nos. 2, 6 and 7), since No. 1 may be regarded as an earlier version of No. 2, and Nos. 3, 4 and 5 as earlier versions of No. 7, and it is on those three that this study concentrates: *Poems 1910*, *Poems 1916-1918* and *Poems 1905-1915*. Two of them, however, are not entirely distinct, as a number of poems are found in both *Poems 1910* and *Poems 1905-1915*, but between them these three contain all the poems which Cavafy ever included in any thematic collection.

Before proceeding to a detailed examination of these collections I shall briefly outline their genesis.

The third group of poems in the 1963 edition, headed '1896-1904', contains all the poems published before 1905 which Cavafy did not subsequently repudiate. It is essentially the same as his first thematic collection, *Poems 1904*, with the addition of "Τείχη" and "Ἡ Κηδεία τοῦ Σαρπηδόνοϋ",² but its history is more complicated than this suggests. *Poems 1904* was replaced in 1910 by a second collection, *Poems 1910*, in which a further seven poems, including "Ἡ Κηδεία τοῦ Σαρπηδόνοϋ" but not "Τείχη", were added to the fourteen poems of the first collection. The order of the earlier poems relative to each other was not altered, although there was some interleaving of old and new poems in the second half of the expanded collection (see Table 1, columns 1 and 2). The additional poems in the 1910 collection, which were all first published between 1905 and

2. Savidis' new edition (Cavafy 1991) presents the 1904 collection in its original form, as 'Appendix I', headed '1897-1904', and relegates the two additional poems to 'Appendix II'.

1909, were eventually incorporated into the 1905-15 collection, with the exception of "Ἡ Κηδεία τοῦ Σαρπηδόνοϋ". Although the revised form of this poem was first published in 1908, an earlier version had been published in 1898 and Cavafy seems to have continued to regard it as a poem of 1893.³ On the other hand, Cavafy clearly regarded "Τὰ Βήματα" as a poem of 1908 since it was included in the thematic collection *Poems 1908-1914* even though it was a rewriting of "Τὰ Βήματα τῶν Εὐμενίδων" which had been published in 1897. It may have been the change of title which was decisive in this case.⁴

"Τείχη" owes its position in the Cavafy 'canon' to its inclusion in a manuscript notebook in which Cavafy wrote out for his heir Sengopoulos, probably after 1926, all the poems of the 1910 collection in their established sequence with the addition of "Τείχη" between "Τρῶες" and "Περιμένοντας τοὺς Βαρβάρους",⁵ making 22 poems in all. It is the contents of this manuscript version of the 1910 collection which I shall consider here, since it represents the furthest development of Cavafy's earliest thematic collection.⁶ The group of sixteen poems headed '1896-1904' in the 1963 edition is in effect what remains of this manuscript sequence after the removal of the six later poems, the order of the poems being otherwise undisturbed. This particular combination of sixteen poems was never circulated by Cavafy and had no existence in print before the 1963 edition. Although there is no indication that Cavafy ever wanted to suppress any of the poems in the 1910 collection,⁷ he does not seem to have circulated that collection after 1915.⁸

3. Savidis in Cavafy 1963: A128. Translations, whether from the poems or secondary sources, are my own unless otherwise stated.

4. The same logic could have applied to "Ἰωνικόν". Although first published with this title in 1911 and included in *Poems 1909-11*, it was a rewriting of "Μνήμη", published in 1896. With regard to Cavafy's treatment of "Ἡ Κηδεία τοῦ Σαρπηδόνοϋ" see also Note 45 in Section 10.

5. Cavafy 1963: A128, and Savidis 1966: 58n and 101-2.

6. 'Poems 1910' or 'the 1910 collection' in this article must generally be understood to refer to this, i.e. to mean 'Poems 1910 plus "Τείχη".'

7. All the poems from that collection which had been published before 1908 were reprinted in *Νέα Τέχνη* in 1924 and 1925 and many of them again in *Ἀλεξανδρινή Τέχνη* in 1926 and 1927, and Cavafy referred enquirers to these publications (Savidis 1966: 64-5 and 189).

8. Savidis 1966: 46.

Meanwhile in 1912 he had initiated a practice, which he maintained to the end of his life, of distributing his more recent poems as a folder of loose sheets with the poems numbered in chronological order of first publication. These chronological collections were frequently extended by the addition of new poems; and from 1918 onwards earlier poems were also removed from them, once those poems had been incorporated into his new series of thematic collections. The remaining poems were then renumbered, thus inaugurating a new chronological collection.

The first of the new *thematic* collections, *Poems 1909-1911* (first issued in 1917), included poems from both the first chronological collection, *Poems 1910-1912/18*,⁹ and the 1910 thematic collection. *Poems 1909-1911* was augmented in stages with the addition of both earlier and later poems until it reached its final form in the collection, *Poems 1905-1915*, first issued in 1930. The intervening forms were *Poems 1908-1914* (first issued in 1920), and *Poems 1907-1915* (1926).¹⁰ At each stage the poems of the earlier collection remained as the framework of the new collection; their positions relative to each other were not changed, the new poems being inserted among them (see Table 1, Columns 3-6). This suggests that Cavafy had established the basic principles of the thematic organisation from the outset. It also follows that there is no need here to give separate detailed consideration to each of the earlier stages. I shall, therefore, in the main, confine my examination, as with the 1904/1910 collection, to the most developed form, in this case the 1905-15 collection (the first group of poems in Savidis' 1963 and subsequent editions).

With the thematic collection, *Poems: 1916-1918* (the second group of poems in the 1963 edition), the situation is much simpler. It was first issued in 1929 and never subsequently altered or extended.

9. Usually in the chronological collections only the starting date, i.e. the year of first publication of the earliest poems included in any given collection, was printed on the title page. The closing date was added by hand to indicate the year of first publication of the most recent poems included in a particular copy. Here '1912/18' indicates that the collection was first issued as *Poems 1910-1912* and in its final form as *Poems 1910-1918*.

10. For full bibliographical details of this series of collections, and also of the 1916-18 collection see Savidis 1966: 81-90 and *passim*.

In his 'Editor's Introduction' to Keeley and Sherrard's translation of Cavafy's *Collected Poems* (Cavafy 1975: 388), Savidis says, referring jointly to *Poems 1905-1915* and *Poems 1916-1918*, 'I consider this thematic sequence of prime importance to any critical reading of Cavafy's poetry.' Yet it seems that critics and translators have not given the thematic collections the attention they deserve. It is both an indication of their neglect and a cause of further neglect that the collections as such were not widely available¹¹ even in Greek until 1963,¹² and that no translator into English has so far seen fit to reproduce any of Cavafy's thematic arrangements. There is, I believe, still much to be gained from the thematic collections both in the interpretation of individual poems and in furthering our understanding of Cavafy's poetic development, to say nothing of the satisfaction in appreciating the artfulness of their construction.

An unsigned note defending Cavafy's poetry against the criticism of Timos Malanos, which appeared in the Alexandrian literary journal, *Ἀλεξανδρινὴ Τέχνη*, in the issue dated 6 May 1927, is generally thought to have been approved and probably even written by Cavafy himself. The note's most frequently cited extract states, in Keeley's by now familiar translation (1976: 186), that Cavafy 'has three areas of concern: the philosophical, the historical and the erotic (or sensual).' This perhaps overdefines the third area by rendering 'ἡδονικὴ' (often a problematic word in translating Cavafy) as 'erotic'; and this becomes positively misleading when 'or sensual' is omitted, as it often is when the passage is quoted. In the original¹³ it reads as follows:

Ὁ Καβάφης . . . ἔχει τρεῖς περιοχές — τὴν φιλοσοφικὴν (ἢ τῆς σκέψης), τὴν ἱστορικὴν, καὶ τὴν ἡδονικὴν (ἢ αἰσθησιακὴν).

Here I have adopted 'sensual' as the most appropriate single adjective

11. Cavafy had circulated only 189 copies of *Poems 1910*, 158 copies of *Poems 1905-1915* and 228 copies of *Poems 1916-1918*. Of the three earlier stages of *Poems 1905-1915* he had circulated a combined total of 870 copies; and 88 copies of *Poems 1904* (Savidis 1966: 215-83).

12. Not until 1968 in the case of the 1910 collection, when Savidis published a facsimile edition of the Sengopoulos notebook (Cavafy 1968b).

13. Quoted in Savidis 1966: 209-210.

to denote this third area. Keeley's translation omits the expression 'ἢ τῆς σκέψης', which might be rendered 'or reflective', and which reminds us that 'philosophical' is not used in any strict sense but simply denotes poems which reflect on life in a general way.

Even if Cavafy had had no connection with the writing of this note, his own thematic arrangements of his poems would by themselves provide sufficient evidence that he thought of his work in these terms.

I shall try to show that the first principle of organisation in each thematic collection is the division of the poems into the *philosophical, historical and sensual* categories,¹⁴ and always in that order (although there is no sensual section in the 1910 collection), and that there is a single, simple principle which determines the arrangement of the historical poems. I shall make some suggestions about the rationale behind Cavafy's arrangements of the philosophical and sensual poems, and argue that, in some cases at least, the position of a poem in a sequence may affect, and may have been intended to affect, our reading of that poem. I hope in this way to indicate how each thematic collection is more than the sum of its parts, a meta-poetic form, a work of art in its own right.

I begin in the middle, chronologically speaking, with *Poems 1905-1915*, because it offers the clearest illustration of the basic thesis with all three areas well represented and fairly evenly balanced.

1. 1905-15: historical

In Table 3, column 5, I have set against the titles of all those poems in the 1905-15 collection which have any historical content or reference the dates (or limiting time spans) of the events or situations referred to, as far as I have been able to determine them. Examination of the resulting list of dates immediately suggests the possibility that in Nos. 12-27¹⁵ we have a series of 16 poems on historical themes arranged in *chronological order of their subject matter*, from the flight

14. Haas notes in passing (1987: 132-3) the division of *Poems 1905-1915* into the three 'areas'. Savidis outlines (1985-7: A69) a more complex division of both the 1905-15 and the 1916-18 collections, but it involves classificatory terms not derived from Cavafy, and he does not address the collections in their entirety, but only refers to those poems proposed for inclusion in a recording.

15. Those poems with historical content among Nos. 1-11 are discussed in Section 3.

of Demetrius Poliorcetes, abandoned by his troops, in 288 B.C. (No. 12) to the death of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus in 1180 A.D. (No. 27).

Those poems whose historical content can be fairly closely dated (Nos. 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 26 and 27) are clearly in historical sequence. In the case of those poems where only an approximate indication of dating can be given (Nos. 13, 14, 17, 22 and 25), that dating is in all cases consistent with their position in the sequence. That leaves three poems (Nos. 19, 23 and 24) of which little more can be said than that they belong to the Hellenistic or Roman period in Western Asia, Syria and Egypt respectively. Perhaps their very position in the sequence may be taken as evidence of the dating Cavafy had in mind. Given that Cavafy's historical knowledge, if not comprehensive or systematic, was wide-ranging and often detailed, it is certainly possible that he always had a precise historical context in mind, even where situation and characters appear to be imaginary and he has left little or no dating evidence in the text. If the contention that these 16 poems are arranged in the strict chronological order of their historical subject matter is accepted, then we can perhaps say that the obscure monarch who wishes to be described on his coins as 'Φιλέλλην' (No. 19) is issuing his instructions at some time between 34 B.C. and 68 A.D. (the period being defined by the immediately preceding and succeeding poems); that the Tyanian sculptor of No. 22 was working not merely *after* the death of Caesarion (the most recent of the historical figures among the statues in his workshop), but *some 200 years after*; and that Nos. 23 and 24, two of Cavafy's many poems on the theme of tombs and epitaphs, belong between 150 and 340 A.D., and most probably around the end of the second century.

On the other hand, in constructing this historical sequence Cavafy may occasionally have exploited for aesthetic or thematic purposes the imprecise historical dating of some poems, and one instance of this can, I think, be demonstrated. A comparison of column 2 with columns 5 and 6 in Table 1 shows that when "Ἡ Συνοδεία τοῦ Διονύσου" and "Ὁ Βασιλεὺς Δημήτριος" (which is precisely datable to 288 B.C.) were transferred from *Poems 1910* to the later thematic collections their order was reversed. In *Poems 1905-1915*

"Ο Βασιλεὺς Δημήτριος" is placed first in the historical sequence, with the result that the sequence in this, its final form is framed between two poems (the other is "Μανουὴλ Κομνηνός") which have a very striking thematic link: each concerns a monarch who in a time of crisis (defeat in one case, approaching death in the other) changes his royal robes for humbler garments.¹⁶ Here the indeterminate date of the subject matter of "Ἡ Συνοδεία τοῦ Διονύσου" (and also of "Ἡ Δόξα τῶν Πτολεμαίων") made this effect possible without disturbing the *evident* historical chronology of the sequence. In this context it is also worth noting that "Φιλέλλην" (a poem whose historical dating is even more indeterminate), with its monarch's vain pretensions to Greek culture, is well placed, thematically speaking, after "Ἀλεξανδρινοὶ Βασιλεῖς", where the kingships conferred are described as 'empty words'.

Since a simple principle of historical chronology largely if not exclusively determines the order of these historical poems, there seems to be no further need to look at their arrangement in detail.

2. 1905-15: the earlier stages

Having isolated a historical sequence in *Poems 1905-1915*, I want to look back now at the earlier stages in the development of this collection to demonstrate that the principle of arranging historical poems chronologically according to subject matter was present from the start; and to uncover, outside the historical sequence, one certain and another possible vestige of chronological ordering by publication date.

The following list indicates the order of the twelve poems which make up the thematic collection, *Poems 1909-11*. Each title is followed by the date of first publication. The number in brackets after the date indicates the position of each poem in the chronological collection *Poems 1910-1912/18*.

16. Other instances of framing of sequences in this way are noted below in Sections 3 and 4.

Poems 1909-1911

1. Ἡ Πόλις	April 1910	(1)
2. Ἡ Σατραπεία	June 1910	(2)
3. Μάρτιαι Εἰδοὶ	Dec 1910	(3)
4. Τελειωμένα	Feb 1911	(4)
5. Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον	April 1911	(6)
6. Ἰθάκη	Nov 1911	(10)
7. Ἡ Δόξα τῶν Πτολεμαίων	Sept 1911	(9)
8. Τὰ Βήματα	Sept 1909	—
9. Τυανεὺς Γλύπτης	Mar 1911	(5)
10. Οὗτος Ἐκεῖνος	Mar 1909	—
11. Τὰ Ἐπικίνδυνα	Nov 1911	(8)
12. Ἰωνικόν	June 1911	(7)

The 1909-11 collection, which was printed in 1917, is made up of the first ten poems from the chronological collection, with the addition of two poems of 1909 (Nos. 8 and 10 above) from the thematic collection *Poems 1910*. If we consider the first six poems by themselves it is obvious that they are still arranged in chronological order by publication date. The chance of this occurring as the unintended result of arrangement according to some other principle is 1 in 720 and may be ignored. This collection is therefore, on the face of it, a hybrid, since the first six poems are arranged chronologically and only the remaining six are arranged thematically.

Nos. 5, 7, 8 and 9 of the chronological collection (the numbers on the right) have been removed from the chronological sequence and rearranged together with the two earlier poems as Nos. 7-12 in the new collection (the numbers on the left). Of these, Nos. 7-11 have already been identified as historical poems forming part of the sequence in the 1905-15 collection which is arranged in order of their *historical* chronology. Reference to Table 3, column 5 shows that Nos. 7, 8 and 11 in the list above (Nos. 13, 20 and 26 in Table 3) are fairly closely dated and restricted to relatively short periods of historical time, while the dating of Nos. 9 and 10 (Nos. 22 and 25 in Table 3) is open ended since for each only a *terminus post quem* can be given. No. 9 could therefore occupy any position between 8 and 11 without disturbing the perceptible historical sequence, and

No. 10 any position between 9 and 11. This means there are 8 out of a total of 120 permutations which are not inconsistent with arrangement in historical sequence, and the chance of any one of those eight arrangements occurring other than as a result of deliberate intent is therefore 1 in 15. So we may be fairly sure that even at the first stage of this thematic collection a group of five historical poems has been arranged chronologically according to subject matter.

The first six poems in the 1909-1911 collection form the core of what I discuss in Section 3 as a group of *philosophical* poems in the 1905-15 collection. This leaves No. 12, "Ἰωνικόν", and it could be argued that this is part of the historical sequence, correctly placed at the end, since the reference to the destruction of pagan statues points to events of the fourth century A.D. or later. However, I shall not argue for this, partly because of the surface lyricism¹⁷ of the poem, partly because it contains only a passing reference to history,¹⁸ but mainly because at the next stage in the development of this collection it becomes separated from the historical sequence, as can be seen below.

Here I list, again with dates of first publication, the last nine poems only of *Poems 1908-1914*. (See Table 1 for the full list.)

from *Poems 1908-14*

18. Τὰ Ἐπικίνδυνα	Nov 1911
19. Στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ	Dec 1912
20. Πολὺ Σπανίως	Jan 1913
21. Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ	Oct 1913
22. Ἰωνικόν	June 1911
23. Ἐπέστρεφε	Oct 1912
24. Μακρὰ	Dec 1914
25. Ἐπὶ γὰρ	Oct 1913
26. Πολυέλαιος	June 1914

17. Beaton has shown that the poem's lyrical simplicity is only apparent and argued persuasively for a complex and ironic reading (1981: 526).

18. Its primary temporal context is indeterminate: it is the present of the speaker. This is not necessarily the same as the time of writing of the poem by Cavafy, though it may reasonably be taken to be so, particularly as Cavafy evidently does not treat it as a historical poem in the 1908-14 and subsequent thematic collections.

The four poems which here follow "Ἰωνικόν" are all on explicitly erotic themes and are clearly *not* arranged in order of publication. The three poems which have been inserted between the historical sequence (which still ends with "Τὰ Ἐπικίνδυνα") and "Ἰωνικόν", together with "Ἰωνικόν" itself, are among the poems in the 1905-15 collection to which the more general description *sensual* may be applied (see Section 4). Thus the eight poems following the historical sequence in *Poems 1908-1914* are thematically divided into two sub-groups of four, the first *sensual*, the second more specifically *erotic*, but together forming a sequence which can be termed *sensual*. Nos. 19-21 are apparently arranged in order of publication. The probability of this occurring other than intentionally is 1 in 6. I shall suggest in Section 4 thematic reasons for the placing of "Στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ" at the beginning of this group of poems and immediately after the historical sequence. If this poem's position is determined by considerations other than its publication date then there is an even chance of the following two poems being in publication order, whatever principle of organisation is involved, and thus of all three appearing to be so. At the next stage, *Poems 1907-1915*, "Ζωγραφισμένα" and "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ", both first published in June 1916, are inserted between "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ" and "Ἰωνικόν" (see Table 1, column 5), so that the first five of the sensual poems now appear to be arranged in publication order. However, in the *chronological* collection *Poems 1915-1920/26*, "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ" comes before "Ζωγραφισμένα". Cavafy, therefore, in transferring them to the thematic collection, has not retained the relative positions he had assigned to these two poems in a series explicitly arranged in order of publication. While I do not altogether discount the possibility that we have here another vestige of chronological ordering within a thematic collection, in Section 4 I shall discuss the sensual poems of the 1905-15 collection on the assumption that they are ordered throughout on the basis of purely thematic considerations.

3. 1905-15: philosophical

Looking at the group of 11 poems which precede the identified historical sequence in the 1905-15 collection, it is evident from the

list of titles alone that they include a number of poems with some reference to history or myth:

2. Ἡ Σατραπεία
4. Μάρτιαι Εἰδοί
6. Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον
7. Ὁ Θεόδοτος
9. Ἰθάκη
11. Τρῶες

These six poems are not all in historico-chronological order (although the first three happen to be); they are in any case interspersed with other poems of a philosophical or reflective kind which have no specific historical reference; and they have a distinct tone and manner not found in the poems of the historical sequence which follows. It appears that despite their historical content Cavafy treated these poems as philosophical rather than historical. They are among the twelve poems identified by Beaton (1983: 24) as those 'in which Cavafy presents or refers to the past more or less explicitly as a moral allegory for the present.'

Although in what follows I am to some extent reiterating the arguments by which Beaton distinguishes these and other poems from the main body of Cavafy's historical poetry, my objective is different since I am trying to understand the distinctions which Cavafy himself appears to have made in ordering his thematic collections. Beaton's distinction is almost entirely borne out by the way in which the poems he lists are treated in the thematic collections. Ten out of the twelve poems¹⁹ appear in either *Poems 1910* or *Poems 1905-1915* ("Τρῶες" appears in both), and these ten are, with the single exception of "Μανουὴλ Κομνηνός" (which is discussed below), separated from the historical poems in those collections.

As Table 3, column 4 shows, the first five of the six poems listed above are in the second person singular, while the sixth, "Τρῶες", is in the first person plural. Also, they are all primarily in the present

19. The other two are from the *Unpublished Poems* (Cavafy 1968a) and therefore do not concern me here. Three out of the ten were first published before 1905 and will be considered in Section 6.

tense. This is not just a narrative present; it is also as far as we can tell the present of the poet. These poems are addressed to the reader, or perhaps to the poet's soul, as in "Μάρτιαι Εἰδοί":

Τὰ μεγαλεῖα νὰ φοβᾶσαι, ὦ ψυχή.

I say *the poet's* rather than *Cavafy's* soul, since one can never be sure that Cavafy is not wearing a mask. In these poems, though, the mask (if there is one) is not that of some historical persona (as it is in the first- and second-person poems in the historical sequence, Nos. 13, 19, 22 and 23). Indeed it is the reader (or the poet's soul) who is here asked to wear such a mask. One is asked to imagine that one is the unnamed Greek who, discouraged by lack of recognition or success, decides to set off for the Persian court (No. 2):

Καὶ τί φορικτὴ ἡ μέρα ποὺ ἐνδίδεις
(ἡ μέρα ποὺ ἀφέθηκες κ' ἐνδίδεις),
καὶ φεύγεις ὁδοιπὸρος γιὰ τὰ Σοῦσα.

Or Caesar on that fateful day in 44 B.C. (No. 4):

Κι ὅταν θὰ φθάσεις στὴν ἀκμὴ σου, Καῖσαρ πιά·
ἔτσι περιωνύμου ἀνθρώπου σχῆμα ὅταν λάβεις,
τότε κυρίως πρόσεξε σὰν βγείς στὸν δρόμον ἔξω.

Or Mark Antony on the night the god abandons him to his final defeat (No. 6):

Σὰν ξεφνα, ὦρα μεσάνυχτ', ἀκουσθεῖ
ἀόρατος θίασος νὰ περνᾷ
μὲ μουσικὲς ἐξαίσιες, μὲ φωνές —
τὴν τύχη σου ποὺ ἐνδίδει πιά, τὰ ἔργα σου
ποὺ ἀπέτυχαν, τὰ σχέδια τῆς ζωῆς σου
ποὺ βγήκαν ὅλα πλάνες, μὴ ἀνωφέλετα θρηνησεις.

Or Odysseus (No. 9):

Σὰ βγείς στὸν πηγαμὸ γιὰ τὴν Ἰθάκη.

The key words are 'ὅταν' and 'σάν'. The historical events are used as extended metaphors for aspects of the human condition. The point is not that these things *did* happen (Caesar failed to read Artemidorus' message, Odysseus set out for Ithaca), but that analogous events *might* happen to any one of us. This is made explicit in the second stanza of "Ὁ Θεόδοτος", where, as Cavafy himself noted (Lechonitis 1977: 30), the reader is suddenly addressed no longer as though he were Caesar, but directly:

Καὶ μὴ ἐπαναπαύεσαι ποῦ στὴν ζωὴ σου
περιωρισμένη, τακτοποιημένη, καὶ πεζή,
τέτοια θεαματικά καὶ φοβερά δὲν ἔχει.
Ἴσως αὐτὴν τὴν ὥρα εἰς κανενὸς γειτόνου σου
τὸ νοικοκυρεμένο σπίτι μπαίνει —
ἀόρατος, ἄϋλος — ὁ Θεόδοτος,
φέρνοντας τέτοιο ἓνα φρικτὸ κεφάλι.

Note the repetition of the generalising adjective *τέτοιος*: *such* things can happen . . . *perhaps*.

Included in Beaton's list of twelve allegorical poems is "Μανουὴλ Κομνηνός", which, as we have seen, forms part of a historical sequence which is partly identified as such by the arrangement of its poems in chronological order of their subject matter. I have therefore assumed it to be a historical poem. In the last three lines, however, the poet seems to step back from the historical events he has been relating to make explicit comment:

Εὐτυχισμένοι ὅλοι ποῦ πιστεύουν,
καὶ σάν τὸν βασιλέα κὺρ Μανουὴλ τελειώνουν
ντυμένοι μὲς τὴν πίστι τῶν σεμνότατα.

It is not, I think, entirely clear from these final lines that Cavafy intends us to see the emperor's actions 'as a moral allegory for the present,' as Beaton's classification seems to imply. Surely the tone here is sarcastic. According to Gibbon, with whose work we know Cavafy was familiar. Manuel Comnenus was not known for his piety or humility, but for his military prowess, the luxury and licence of his court, and 'the incestuous love of his niece Theodora.'²⁰ If we take

20. Gibbon 1909-14: V, 245-7.

these lines at face value, as we must do if they are to establish the poem as a moral allegory, we are in effect attributing a piece of trite and conventional piety to Cavafy himself. Against such interpretation may be set Cavafy's own description of this poem as 'completely historical' (Lechonitis 1977: 32). Perhaps we are intended to imagine these last three lines of the poem as coming from the lips of one of the dead emperor's attendants. In any case we must surely read them as an ironic comment, whether direct or indirect, on the historical events themselves, and not as pointing to some general moral for the present to be derived from those events.

In the historical section (Nos. 12-27) the majority of the poems are in the third person. In the three first-person poems there (Nos. 13, 22 and 23) the speakers are located within the historical context. The same is true of the one poem in the second person (No. 19), where the petty monarch in Western Asia is giving instructions to an official responsible for his coinage. Writing in the historical mode the poet may often appear to be writing *from* his own present (as opposed to adopting the present of the historical moment), but — with notable exceptions among later poems ("Καίσαριών", "Ἐν τῷ Μηνὶ Ἀθύρ", "Ἀπὸ ὑαλὶ χρωματιστό") — that present does not intrude into the text.

Except perhaps for a few early examples among the 'unpublished' or 'repudiated' poems, Cavafy as 'historian-poet' is never simply retelling a historical tale in verse, or 'versifying history.'²¹ Cavafy's history is always informed by his ethical and aesthetic concerns, but in the poems which he seems to have regarded as properly historical these concerns are expressed indirectly, without explicit authorial comment, through innuendo, irony and sudden changes of tone. Poems in which Cavafy makes overt use of history as metaphor or allegory are clearly distinguished in his arrangement of the 1905-15 collection, as they are in the earlier thematic collection *Poems 1910* (see Sections 5 and 6). This allegorical mode is one which Cavafy did not employ in poems *written* after 1911, as Beaton has pointed out (1983: 25), although "Ὁ Θεόδοτος" was not *published* until 1915.

21. Beaton 1983: 30, quoting Seferis.

In turning now to consider the arrangement of the poems in this philosophical sequence, it must be remembered that the poems in the original core of the sequence (Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9 in Table 3) are arranged in order of publication date, as shown in Section 2. This may mean that in the period prior to 1917, when Cavafy was preparing the 1909-11 collection, he was simply not concerned to rearrange these philosophical poems thematically. On the other hand it is also possible that he saw no need to rearrange them because the chronological arrangement by publication dates also provided a perfectly satisfactory thematic sequence. The poems which were added to the sequence later (Nos. 3, 7, 8, 10 and 11) were located without reference to publication dates. Their positions were determined, we may assume, thematically; and more weight should perhaps be given to those of the following observations which concern the relation of these additional poems to one another, or to poems in the pre-existing sequence ordered by publication dates, than to observations which concern only the latter. However, the whole group of eleven poems does work extraordinarily well as a thematic sequence. They all revolve around a number of related issues; there are verbal links which run from poem to poem; and the metaphor of the journey turns up in several poems in different forms, as does the motif of 'the street outside' as a place of danger and opportunity.

The first and last poems in this sequence have a strong thematic link: the motif of being trapped in a city. The anonymous individual of an unspecified city who is addressed in "Ἡ Πόλις" is, in a literal sense, free to leave the city, but cannot escape from his ruined life with which the city is identified. He is held there by his own limitations and the consequences of his actions, while the Trojans in No. 11 (the last poem to be added to this sequence) are held in their city by an external force, the besieging Achaeans. All the intervening poems could be said to explore in various ways the relationship between individual endeavour and external circumstance or fate.

Noting a variant form of the third line of "Ἡ Σατραπεία" which reads 'ἡ ἄδικη αὐτῇ σου ἡ πόλις' (in place of 'αὐτῇ σου ἡ τύχη' in the published version), Savidis suggests (1985-7: B303) that this explains more clearly why in his thematic collections Cavafy always put this poem immediately after "Ἡ Πόλις". But there is sufficient

reason without this particular verbal link (and we can't rule out the non-thematic explanation of arrangement by publication dates). "Ἡ Σατραπεία" can be read as a sequel to "Ἡ Πόλις", as if the same voice were speaking again after an interval of some years; years in which the person addressed has left his own city, gone to 'another land' and 'another city', but has found, as he had as it were been warned in the previous poem, that the foreign city, although it has given him wealth and honours, cannot give him what he really wants, precisely because it is not his own, Greek city. His departure from his own city is presented as an act of moral weakness: 'καὶ τί φορικτὴ ἡ μέρα . . . ποῦ ἀφέθηκες κι ἐνδίδεις.' He gives in, one might say, to the seductive notion of escape presented in quotation marks in the first stanza of "Ἡ Πόλις" and declared an illusion in the second. 'Αὐτὰ ποῦ θὰ τὰ βρεῖς στὴ σατραπεία' recalls 'καινούριους τόπους δὲν θὰ βρεῖς' in "Ἡ Πόλις", for the satrapy is an example of the kind of 'new place' you cannot really find, since 'the city will follow you,' as the memory of a Greek city pursues and taunts its citizens in his foreign satrapy.²²

In "Ἡ Πόλις" the foresight which could forestall the futile attempt at flight is offered in the form of a warning; in "Ἡ Σατραπεία" that attempt has been made, one might say, through lack of foresight; and foresight is the subject of the next poem, "Σοφοὶ δὲ Προσιόντων". The Greek addressed in "Ἡ Σατραπεία" craved the 'praise of the demos and the sophists' ('τοῦ Δήμου καὶ τῶν Σοφιστῶν'), and these two groups may be roughly equated with 'the people' and 'the wise' ('οἱ λαοὶ' and 'οἱ σοφοί') in "Σοφοὶ δὲ Προσιόντων", although there the two groups are sharply distinguished and not banded together as in "Ἡ Σατραπεία", for the wise may catch some hint of 'approaching events' while the people 'hear nothing.' Thus, read after "Ἡ Σατραπεία", this poem may be felt to call in question the value of popular acclaim, the acclaim of the *demos*.

In "Σοφοὶ δὲ Προσιόντων" the people who hear nothing are said to be 'εἰς τὸν ὁδὸν ἔξω,' while in the following poem, "Μάρτυρι

22. Compare Keeley's joint interpretation of the two poems (1976: 21-2).

Εἰδοί'', Caesar's hour of testing comes 'στὸν δρόμον ἔξω,' where, as the reader knows (though it is not stated in the poem), he failed to take notice of Artemidorus' warning of *approaching events*. The implication is that had he done so he might have been able to take action to save himself. But he might then have found himself in the position presented in the next poem, "Τελειωμένα":

λυώνουμε καὶ σχεδιάζουμε τὸ πῶς νὰ κάμουμε
γιὰ ν' ἀποφύγουμε τὸν βέβαιον
τὸν κίνδυνον ποὺ ἔτσι φρικτὰ μᾶς ἀπειλεῖ.

Thus the conclusion of "Τελειωμένα" may appear to cast doubt on the implications of the preceding poem: for all our foresight we made a mistake, that particular danger is not approaching us ('δὲν εἶν' αὐτὸς στὸν δρόμον' — echoing 'εἰς τὸν δρόμον ἔξω'), the messages were false or we misunderstood them, and some other catastrophe which we never imagined overtakes us.

The mutually disruptive way in which these poems seem to comment on each other through their juxtapositions in the sequence makes it more difficult for the reader to decide what it is that Cavafy himself intends by any particular poem. It warns us not to assume that it is Cavafy's own voice we hear. We can never be sure that he is speaking *as himself*. In these philosophical, or reflective, poems he looks again and again at similar situations or issues, but each time from a subtly different point of view, so that we can never feel certain what his position is, what exactly it is that he thinks.

The next two poems, "Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον" and "Ὁ Θεόδοτος", continue the theme of catastrophe, referring to specific catastrophes which came upon two Romans in Alexandria. Each of them had been Cleopatra's lover, and both poems are based on Plutarch. Reason enough then to put the two together and close to "Μάρτυρι Εἰδοί" which refers to the final catastrophe which overtook Julius Caesar (who figures in "Ὁ Θεόδοτος"). There is a strong verbal link between "Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον" and the preceding "Τελειωμένα": in the latter the sentence which begins 'some other catastrophe . . . falls upon us' ends with the line,

κι ἀνέτομους — ποῦ πιά καιρὸς — μᾶς συνεπαίρνει,

and "Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον" contains a closely related though contrasted line:

Σὰν ἔτοιμος ἀπὸ καιρὸ, σὰ θαρραλέος.

Each of these lines is given prominence in its own poem, the former by being the final line and the latter through repetition.

After the sequence of phrases, 'εἰς τὸν ὁδὸν ἔξω', 'στὸν δρόμον ἔξω' and the metaphorical 'στὸν δρόμον', running through the previous three poems, it is perhaps worth noting that the unseen band of revellers is passing *in the street outside* Antony's window, and that if Theodotus enters your neighbour's house, he will be coming *in from the street outside*.

Up to this point in the sequence all seven poems have focussed either on particular moments of decision or disaster, or on the generalised notion of such moments. Only the first few lines in both "Μάρτυρι Εἰδοί" and "Ὁ Θεόδοτος" have referred to the conduct of life in general, but there now follow three poems ("Μονοτονία", "Ἰθάκη" and "Ὅσο Μπορεῖς") which do deal with experience in a more general sense, extended in time. The general and particular are then brought together in the final poem of this sequence where it is our efforts in general which are likened to the particular efforts of the Trojans in their ill-fated defence of their city.

Placed between "Ὁ Θεόδοτος" and "Ἰθάκη", a poem as bleak and *monotone* as "Μονοτονία" is clearly shown to be a partial expression. Reading it in this context rather than in isolation one is more likely to see the whole poem as though it were in inverted commas, and less likely to see it as an expression of Cavafy's own despair. 'Partial' (μερικόν) is exactly what Cavafy himself called the poem according to Lechonitis (1977: 21), for 'it is not a question . . . of the fate of mankind, but . . . of some men.'

The monotony of life has already been suggested in the second stanza of "Ὁ Θεόδοτος" ('στὴ ζωὴ σου περιορισμένη, τακτοποιημένη, καὶ πεζή') and this poem may seem to imply that the state of mind conveyed by "Μονοτονία" involves a dangerous illusion: the dreary and uneventful situation the speaker there describes may at any moment be interrupted by disaster. And this is reinforced

if the line, 'μήνας περνᾷ καὶ φέρνει ἄλλον μῆνα', takes the reader back to the *month* in "Μάρτια Εἶδοι" which for Caesar *did not pass*. "Ἰθάκη" on the other hand offers a more optimistic alternative, where the passage of time is not a wearisome succession of endless sameness, but an opportunity, 'full of adventures, full of discoveries.' "Ἰθάκη" thus suggests that the speaker in "Μονοτονία" may be trapped by his own passivity, his inability to act. He has not set out for Ithaca. "Ἰθάκη" is by far the most optimistic poem in this sequence. Several poems present situations in which there seems to be no possibility of effective action ("Ἡ Πόλις", "Ἡ Σατραπεία", "Μονοτονία", "Τρῶες") while in others there seems to be only the narrowest window of opportunity ("Σοφοὶ δὲ Προσιόντων", "Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον", "Ὅσο Μπορεῖς").

"Ἰθάκη" actually contains within it the title of the following poem ('ὅσο μπορεῖς πὶδ ἄφθονα ἡδονικὰ μυρωδικά'), and "Ὅσο Μπορεῖς" itself can be read as an afterthought to "Ἰθάκη": 'And if you cannot make your life as you want it' (full of adventures, discoveries and pleasures perhaps, as in "Ἰθάκη"), 'try to do this at least, as far as you can, don't degrade it.' The advice offered here is not unlike one of the necessary conditions, as stated in "Ἰθάκη", for avoiding the Laestrygonians etc: you will not meet them 'if you keep your thought uplifted.' The imperative, 'τοῦτο προσπάθησε,' already qualified by 'τουλάχιστον', must be further qualified by 'ὅσο μπορεῖς', perhaps because, as "Τρῶες" which follows says, employing the cognate noun,

Εἶν' ἢ προσπάθειές μας τῶν συφοριασμένων
εἶν' ἢ προσπάθειές μας σὰν τῶν Τρώων.

In the absence of direct testimony from Cavafy himself, we cannot know whether any of these considerations passed through his mind in ordering this sequence (in so far as the sequence is *ordered* and not *given* by the original chronological arrangement by publication dates of six of its eleven poems), but the interconnectedness of the poems is there in the text to be observed, and reading them as a sequence suggests new approaches to interpretation.

4. 1905-15: sensual

We are now left with the thirteen poems (Nos. 28-40 in Table 3) which come after the historical sequence in the 1905-15 collection. From No. 34 to the end there is a group of poems which are unmistakably *erotic* (Keeley's narrower definition of the third area), preceded by what is at first sight a rather miscellaneous group of poems. I think the more general epithet *sensual* may be applied to this first group (Nos. 28-33), even including "Στὴν Ἐκκλησία", where the church is apprehended by the *senses* of sight, hearing and smell. These poems provide a gradual and subtle introduction to the more specifically focused erotic poems. That Cavafy might have felt such an introduction appropriate is consistent with the reticence observable in the erotic poems of this period. That the sequence structured in this way works aesthetically is perhaps the more important consideration.

Standing at the beginning of the sensual sequence, "Στὴν Ἐκκλησία" follows on immediately from "Μανουὴλ Κομνηνός", the last poem in the historical sequence, and the resulting interaction between the two poems is rather complex. The immediate transition from 'happy all those who believe' etc. to 'I love the church' may be felt to undermine the views expressed in Section 3 about the status of the sentiments in the closing lines of "Μανουὴλ Κομνηνός", and to favour their interpretation as a straightforward expression of piety by the poet himself. But what is it that he loves about the church? It is, first, the impact on the senses of its furnishings, images and ceremonies, and then its Greekness: it reminds him of 'the great honours of our race, our glorious Byzantine past.' There is nothing here about the faith or humility for which the emperor is apparently commended in the previous poem, no trace of specifically religious sentiment. Whereas the emperor takes on the 'humble appearance of a priest or monk,' in "Στὴν Ἐκκλησία" it is the imposing appearance of the priests which is stressed, 'resplendent in the rich decoration of their vestments.'

If the ironical reading of "Μανουὴλ Κομνηνός" is preferred, then this affects the reading of "Στὴν Ἐκκλησία". If one comes to the reference to the Byzantine past, or heritage (simply 'Βυζαντινισμός' in Greek), with the life and character of the emperor

Manuel Comnenus in mind, one may be prompted to ask how honourable are the 'honours of our race,' how glorious was 'the glorious Byzantine past.' Cavafy's attitude to it in other Byzantine poems is certainly ambivalent. One may suppose that he loved the church much as he loved Byzantium — with considerable reservations — and that when he says 'I love the church,' there is no reason to assume that he is referring to anything more than a particular or typical church building, with all its associations.

"Στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ" acts as a bridge between the poems set in historical contexts and the *sensual* poems, which deal essentially with experience in the present or recent past (i.e. within Cavafy's lifetime). Cavafy's church in which the past is perceived through the senses embodies the survival of the past in the present, the continuity of past and present.

A detailed examination of the poems in this sensual sequence reveals so many links between them on so many different levels — recurring ideas, motifs, images, words — and particularly between consecutive poems, that they almost give the impression of having been composed as a sequence.

As with both the historical and the philosophical poems in this collection there is the suggestion of the deliberate framing of the sequence between two graphically related poems. The first and last poems in this sequence are both about candlelit interiors: the typical and real Greek Orthodox church of "Στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ", and the small, empty and presumably imaginary room of "Πολυέλαιος".

Each of the first three poems includes the motif of entering a building, expressed in each case by the same verb in the same tense preceded by the same conjunction:

Ἐκεῖ σὰν μὲν, μὲς σ' ἐκκλησίᾳ	("Στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ")
σὰν μπεῖ στὸ σπῆτι τοῦ	("Πολύ Σπανίως")
Στὸ μαγαζὶ σὰν μπεῖ ἀγοραστὴς κανεῖς	("Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ")

In the fourth poem, "Ζωγραφισμένα", the setting is again indoors, but the poet is aware of the weather outside, and is looking at a picture of a boy in an outdoor setting. This acts as a transition to the outdoor

settings of the next two poems, "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖου" and "Ἰωνικόν". Then follows "Στοῦ Καφενεῖου τὴν Εἴσοδο", where the beautiful individual to whom the poet's attention is drawn is standing in a doorway — neither inside nor out. This leads neatly back to the interior of "Μιὰ Νύχτα". There are no specific spatial references in the remaining four poems between "Μιὰ Νύχτα" and "Πολυέλαιος".

"Στὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ" is in the first person and begins, "Τὴν Ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀγαπῶ." and it is followed by two poems in the third person. When the poet reappears in the first person in the fourth poem, "Ζωγραφισμένα", he does so in a way which echoes this beginning, not only in the repetition of the verb, but also in the aural affinity of the initial nouns with their identical articles: "Τὴν ἐργασία μου τὴν προσέχω καὶ τὴν ἀγαπῶ." The intervening poems introduce two personae, the old and decrepit poet of "Πολύ Σπανίως" and the skilled jeweller of "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ". Each has something to hide: the first the wretched state of his ageing body; the second the boldest and most skilful products of his art. But the old poet is not entirely wretched. He, like the jeweller, has his secret joy: as he goes into his house he contemplates 'the part he still has in youth' through the young men who recite and are moved by his verses.

Keeley suggests (1976: 62) that the old poet of "Πολύ Σπανίως" is an imaginative self-portrait in which Cavafy projects himself forward into old age. The jeweller may perhaps be taken as another self-portrait. "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ" invites metaphorical interpretation. It would seem too slight a poem if it did not carry some hidden meaning. The basic metaphor involved here may be traced back almost twenty years to a poem written and published in 1894 and later repudiated by Cavafy, "Τὸ Καλαμάρι". It is addressed to 'the poet's sacred, precious inkwell' and includes the following lines:

Where found your ink its mythic
wealth! Each drop as on the paper falls
sets for us one diamond more
in the jewels of the imagination.

Here the reference of the metaphor is spelled out, but in a poem much more closely related to "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ", the unpublished

"Τεχνητά Ἀνθή", written before 1903 and rewritten at that date, it remains implicit, but is confirmed by Cavafy's inclusion of that poem under the heading 'Our Art' in his thematic catalogue.²³ Other poems listed there indicate that the art in question is poetry. One of these,²⁴ "Nous n'osons plus chanter les roses", written in 1892 and also unpublished, provides, I believe, the key to the elaboration of the metaphor in "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ". Fearing 'τὰ τετριμμένα' (probably the *worn out*, i.e. conventional, opinions of society at large), the poet leaves many things unsaid, but

In my heart are written
many poems; and these
my buried songs I love.

The second stanza tells us that the subject of these poems written only in the poet's heart is youthful erotic experience.²⁵ The poet's attitude to his 'buried songs' brings him very close to the jeweller of

23. This catalogue has still to be published, but one can piece together parts of it from the many references by Savidis and others who have seen it, especially from Savidis' notes to the *Unpublished Poems* (Cavafy 1968a: 208ff), where the partial lists of poems to be found under various catalogue headings sometimes end, tantalisingly, 'and others.' My references to the thematic catalogue are based on my own lists, collated from various published sources and supplemented by information kindly provided by Dr. Sarah Ekdawi, from her lists (which were compiled in the same fashion). Under the heading 'Passions' are included poems written at least as late as 1914 ('Μακρυά'). The rest of the thematic catalogue appears to have been discontinued before the first thematic collection, *Poems: 1904*, was first issued. The latest poem included under any heading other than 'Passions' in the catalogue is, as far as I am aware, "Ἡρώδης Ἀττικός", written in 1900, unless three poems *rewritten* in 1903 and 1904 (whose dates of first composition are not precisely known) were first entered or re-entered in the catalogue at those dates. (I refer to "Τεχνητά Ἀνθή", "Θέλω θανεῖν μάλλον ἢ ζῆν", later revised again as "Θεόφιλος Παλατολόγος", and the lost poem "Εὐλάβεια".) The so-called "'Passions' File", also found in the Cavafy archive and referred to repeatedly by Keeley and Savidis in Cavafy 1972 (23 and 58ff), is evidently later in date and quite distinct from the thematic catalogue. It is also different in form, not a list of titles, but a folder ('φάκελος') containing the manuscripts of at least eleven unpublished erotic poems written between 1904 and 1923 (Savidis in Cavafy 1968a: 237ff), and not nine as implied by Keeley and Savidis (Cavafy 1972: 23).

24. Others include "Τὸ Καλαμάρι" and "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί".

25. In "Κρυμμένα", another unpublished poem but written much later, in 1908 (only four years before the writing of "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ"), Cavafy returned to this theme but in a retrospective, less self-pitying and more ironic way.

"Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ", who clearly takes great delight and pride in his secret creations which are not for the eyes of the customers who come into his shop. If we take this jeweller, this master craftsman, to be the poet himself, then it is a short step to see the 'roses made from rubies' and the other artificial flowers as his 'buried songs', the erotic poems he was unable to write for fear of moral censure,²⁶ which remained written only in his heart (and perhaps a few erotic poems he had actually written but felt unable to make public), and the 'splendid pieces of jewellery' which the jeweller 'takes from their boxes and sells' as the poems he had written and published.²⁷ This reading has been hinted at by various critics,²⁸ and the position of the poem between "Πολὺ Σπανίως", which concerns an old man whose art had been poetry, and "Ζωγραφισμένα", where the poet himself describes a day when the writing of poetry was not going well, is surely meant to lead the reader to identify the jeweller with the poet. In the last line of "Πολὺ Σπανίως" the old poet's work is referred to as 'his own expression of beauty,' and in "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ" it is stressed that the flowers are not an imitation of nature but a personal vision:

Ὡς αὐτὸς τὰ κρίνει,

τὰ θέλησε, τὰ βλέπει ὡραῖα· ὅχι ὅπως στὴν φύσι
τὰ εἶδεν ἢ τὰ σπούδασε.

The identification is further reinforced by the phrase 'τὴν προσέχω' in the first line of "Ζωγραφισμένα", which echoes the opening

26. The description of the artificial flowers as 'δείγμα τῆς τολμερῆς δουλειᾶς' also points us in this direction, since Cavafy seems to use the adjective *τολμερός* in a number of poems referred to below as a subtle indicator that he is writing of homosexual love.

27. The jeweller's implied pride and pleasure in his secret creations may lead the reader to think of 'the joy and essence of my life' in "Ἡδονῇ" which is 'the memory of the hours when I found and held pleasure as I desired it.' If we add to this the poet's instruction to himself in "Ὅταν Διηγείρονται" (which comes immediately before "Ἡδονῇ" in the 1916-18 collection) to 'put your erotic visions half-hidden in your phrases,' we can suggest a slightly different, less analogical, interpretation of "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ". As "Κρυμμένα" also tells us, the things most essential to the poet will be present, but concealed rather than openly displayed in the poetry, as the jeweller's finest creations are present but not openly displayed in his shop.

28. See for example Yourcenar 1983: 14 and 71-3, and Papanoutsos 1957: 143-5.

of "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ", 'Τὰ ντύλιξε προσεχτικά', one phrase applying to the poet's own work, the other to the finest products of the jeweller's art. And "Ζωγραφισμένα" brings together visual art and the art of the word in a single experience: 'And so in art itself' — the erotic picture of a boy — 'I rest from its labours' — the composition of poetry.

There is a strong verbal connection involving both similarity and contrast between the penultimate line of "Ζωγραφισμένα",

Κάθομαι καὶ κυττάζω ἔτσι πολλὴν ὥρα,

and the first line of the following poem, "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ",

'Εδῶ ἄς σταθῶ. Κι ἄς δῶ κ' ἐγὼ τὴν φύσι λίγο.

In "Ζωγραφισμένα" the poet moves from his own work which is not going well to the contemplation of a picture. In "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ" the movement is reversed: his contemplation of nature is short-lived, and he soon superimposes on what is in front of his eyes 'τὲς φαντασίες μου, τὲς ἀναμνήσεις μου, τὰ ἰνδάλματα τῆς ἡδονῆς.' He has, in other words, returned to the substance of his work. The picture in "Ζωγραφισμένα" was also of course a 'vision of pleasure' superimposed on nature, in this case on the bad weather outside which had infected the poet's mood. The contrast between nature and art in "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ", and in the different objects of the poet's contemplation in these two poems, is also presented, and more pointedly, in the lines from "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ" quoted above.

The concluding phrases of "Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ" serve as an introduction to the poems which follow. These are all in one way or another composed of fantasies, memories or idealised images of pleasure. "Ἰωνικόν" gives us the image of one of the ancient gods passing swiftly over the hills of Ionia in the form of a young man. In "Στοῦ Καφενεῖου τὴν Εἴσοδο" the poet's attention is drawn to a beautiful body. That the body is male is not stated, but the reader may take the presence of the young male god in the previous poem as indicative; and this body looks as though it had been made by a god, by Eros:

Κ' εἶδα τ' ὠραῖο σῶμα ποῦ ἔμοιαζε
σὰν ἀπ' τὴν ἄκρα πείρα του νὰ τῶκαμεν ὁ Ἔρως.

When we then read, in "Μιὰ Νύχτα", 'εἶχα τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἔρωτος,' although there is no capital E, the proximity of the god Eros in the previous poem draws out the latent ambiguity.

Up to and including "Στοῦ Καφενεῖου τὴν Εἴσοδο" these *sensual* poems have all concentrated on the *sense* of sight. All except "Πολὺ Σπανίως" have been directly concerned with visual images, and even in that poem we have, obliquely, the old poet's observation of the young men's bodies:

ἡ εὐγραμμη, σφιχτοδεμένη σάρκα των.

In "Στοῦ Καφενεῖου τὴν Εἴσοδο", *touch* enters, but it is the imagined touch of the god Eros:

κι ἀφίνοντας ἀπ' τῶν χειρῶν του τὸ ἀγγίγμα
ἓνα αἶσθημά στὸ μέτωπο, στὰ μάτια, καὶ στὰ χεῖλη.

"Μιὰ Νύχτα" may be seen as the poem to which the sequence so far has been leading, to the first avowal of physical possession, prepared for in the preceding poem by the *touch* of the god, and by the words for various parts of the body. The insistent reference to parts of the body (limbs, face, forehead, eyes, lips, skin) is a characteristic shared not only by these two poems but also by the two that follow, "Ἐπέστρεψε" and "Μακρυά". "Στοῦ Καφενεῖου τὴν Εἴσοδο" ends with the word 'χεῖλη', and in "Μιὰ Νύχτα" it is the lips which are the focus of the erotic intoxication so powerfully renewed for the poet through recollection. "Μιὰ Νύχτα" is an instance of the kind of repossession by past feelings which is invoked in "Ἐπέστρεψε". In the later poem it is lips and skin which, through repetition of a line, are most emphasised. *Lips* points back to "Μιὰ Νύχτα", *skin* forward to "Μακρυά", where the skin is the first detail remembered: 'Δέρμα σὰν καμωμένο ἀπὸ ἰασεμί.'

Nowhere in these four poems, which concentrate so much on physical, bodily detail, and where the poet speaks in the first person

(or where his presence is implied by the second person in "Ἐπέστρεφε"), is there anything to indicate unequivocally the gender of the objects of his desire. Among preceding poems admiration for male beauty is admitted by the poet himself in relation to a boy in a picture, and attributed to a fictional, ageing poet. However, the last three poems in this sequence all contain hints that it is not *ordinary* love which concerns the poet. The hints are strongest in the most impersonal of the poems, "Πολυέλαιος", where we are told that in every flame of the candelabra a lustful passion burns, and then that

Μὲς στὴν μικρὴ τὴν κάμαρην, ποὺ λάμπει ἀναμένη
ἀπὸ τοῦ πολυελαίου τὴν δυνατὴ φωτιά,
διόλου συνειθισμένο φῶς δὲν εἶν' αὐτὸ ποὺ βγαίνει.

No ordinary light, and furthermore,

Γι' ἄτολμα σώματα δὲν εἶναι καμωμένη
αὐτῆς τῆς ζέστης ἡ ἡδονή.

The message is clear enough for anyone who wants to read it; and once read it affects the reading of the two preceding poems. "Ἀπὸ . . . τὴν δυνατὴ φωτιά" throws light back onto "Κ' ἦπια ἀπὸ δυνατὰ κρασιά" in "Ἐπῆγα", and the last two lines of "Πολυέλαιος" ('Γι' ἄτολμα σώματα' etc.) illuminate what follows: 'καθὼς ποὺ πίνουν οἱ ἀνδρεῖοι τῆς ἡδονῆς'. 'Δυνατὴ' is also echoed by its cognate noun in "Ὀμνύει" ('ἡ νύχτα μὲ τὴν δικὴ της δύναμι τοῦ σώματος ποὺ θέλει καὶ ζητεῖ') and 'ἄτολμα σώματα' resonates further back in the sequence, in "Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ" ('δείγμα τῆς τολμερῆς δουλειᾶς του καὶ ἱκανῆς'), and even in a poem from the historical section, "Τὰ Ἐπικίνδυνα", where Myrtios, a Syrian student in Alexandria around 350 A.D., says:

Τὸ σῶμα μου στὲς ἡδονὲς θὰ δώσω,
στὲς ἀπολαύσεις τὲς ὀνειρεμένες,
στὲς τολμηρότερες ἐρωτικὲς ἐπιθυμίες.

The most that Cavafy wanted to say in poems published before 1916 about the kind of passion which concerned him — and even then in

a veiled way except in a fourth-century context, or in the rather impersonal metaphor of the candelabra — was that it was *powerful, daring and not ordinary*.

5. 1910: historical

I look back now to *Poems 1910* to see whether the principles of organisation observed in *Poems 1905-1915* were already present in the earlier collection. There is clearly no sensual section in *Poems 1910*, and only a single poem, "Ἐπιθυμίες", which might be thought of as belonging to that 'area'. Table 2, Column 5 shows that more than half of the poems in this collection (12 out of 22) have some reference to history or myth. Such poems are more numerous in the second half of the list and there is an unbroken run of seven at the end, of which the first three (Nos. 16-18) are on mythical themes and the remaining four (Nos. 19-22) historical. These four are also found in the 1905-15 collection (Table 3, Nos. 12, 14, 20 and 25). The last three of them are clearly in chronological sequence of their subject matter. The reversibility of Nos. 19 and 20 in historical sequence has already been noted in Section 1.

The three myth-based poems are closely related in subject matter and in so far as their events may be related to a historical, or, rather, prehistoric, period, that period is obviously earlier than that of any of the events referred to in the following historical poems. Nos. 17 and 18 are both closely based on episodes in the *Iliad*, and the order in which the two poems are presented preserves the sequence of the Homeric narrative. No. 16, based on non-Homeric sources, refers to the birth and the death of Achilles, i.e. to one event which precedes and to another which follows the events of Nos. 17 and 18 in the narrative sequence of the myths. "Ἀπιστία" could therefore have been placed after "Τὰ Ἀλογα τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως" with equal logic (if one accepts that such logic is at work here). From No. 16 to the end we have, then, a series of seven mythical and historical poems arranged, as far as possible, in chronological order of subject matter.

It appears more likely that we have here a single group of seven poems deliberately ordered in this way (rather than a group of three mythical poems followed by a group of four historical poems), when one considers that, as Ricks points out (1988: 78), in Cavafy's 'own

classification of his early work there is no clear distinction between mythological and historical subjects.' Ricks is referring here (via Savidis 1966: 137-8) to the use of "Ἀρχαῖαι Ἡμέραι" as an 'epititle' to a number of individual poems published in 1897 and 1898, some on mythical and some on historical subjects, and also as the title of a leaflet issued by Cavafy himself in 1898 containing two poems, "Τὰ Δάκρυα τῶν Ἀδελφῶν τοῦ Φαέθοντος" and "Ὁ Θάνατος τοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος Τακίτου" (one on a mythical, and one on a historical subject, and again, for what it's worth, arranged chronologically by subject, in what one might have called Cavafy's first thematic collection, if two poems could be called a collection). "Ἀρχαῖαι Ἡμέραι" is also one of the headings of the thematic catalogue. Under this heading are listed both historical and mythical poems, including, from among the seven poems under consideration here, "Τὰ Ἄλογα τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως" and "Οὗτος Ἐκεῖνος".

Given this lack of distinction between myth and history, we can say that the last seven poems in the 1910 collection all fit the criteria for historical poems proper, as distinct from poems which use history or myth as moral allegory. The reader is not addressed, either directly or indirectly (as when the poet addresses the personae of the poems); these poems are all in the third person, and either in the past tense or the historic present; and the reader is aware of the narrator only as a tone of voice, a shaping presence, who makes no *explicit* comments, moral or otherwise, on the events to which the poems refer. These poems may be said therefore to constitute a historical sequence comparable to Nos. 12-27 (in Table 3) in the 1905-15 collection.

6. 1910: philosophical

We must now consider whether the first fifteen poems of the 1910 collection constitute a philosophical sequence. They include five poems with mythical or historical content (Nos. 7, 8, 9, 12 and 14 in Table 2), three of which are clearly of the moral allegory type and identified as such by Beaton (Nos. 8, 9 and 12). Of these, "Τρῶες" has been referred to in Section 3, and the other two poems share the general characteristics which were there identified: "Διακοπή" is in the first person plural, and the 'we' is general, including the reader ('it is we who interrupt the work of the gods'); and in "Θερμοπύλες"

the valiant and doomed stand at Thermopylae is clearly used as a metaphor, as the predominance of the present tense and the absence of the definite article before 'Θερμοπύλες' in the second line show.²⁹

Τιμὴ σ' ἐκείνους ὅπου στήν ζωὴ τῶν
ᾤρισαν καὶ φυλάγουν Θερμοπύλες.

A fourth poem, "Περιμένοντας τοὺς Βαρβάρους" (No. 14), is also included in Beaton's group of twelve allegorical poems, though he considers it to be a borderline case. It does not have any of the obvious characteristics of an allegorical poem. It takes the form, unique in Cavafy's poetry, of a series of questions and answers with no narrative framework other than the title. The two speakers are located within the context established by their dialogue, for they are observing as they speak the very events they are discussing. However, Cavafy's own notes on this poem (1991: A174-5) leave us in no doubt that he considered it to be allegorical, and to refer to the present or even to a future state of society. He says that he 'took the barbarians for a symbol' and that 'the emperor, the senators and the orators are not necessarily Roman figures.' His notes also provide a detailed decoding of the allegory.

The last of the five potentially historical poems, "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί", remains problematic. It has the formal characteristics of a historical poem but, as we see, it has not been integrated into the historical sequence at the end of this collection. It presents an exchange of words between a (presumably) fictional young poet Eumenes and an older poet called Theocritus. The narrator's own voice only occupies two and a half lines (the rest being the direct speech of the two poets) and does little more than give the speakers' names and tell us that Eumenes is young. The exchange is set in no temporal context, simply 'one day', and there is no reference to place. Perhaps Theocritus' name alone is not sufficient, or was not sufficient for Cavafy, to establish this as a historical poem. However, the distinction in this respect between this poem and "Οὗτος Ἐκεῖνος" is a fine

29. Compare Beaton 1983: 24.

one. The latter also concerns a fictional poet. He is located in time by the reference to Lucian, and located geographically by a double reference (he comes from Edessa and is working in Antioch), but the poem is not otherwise anchored more securely in historical time than "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί", indeed, in one respect less so, for, since Theocritus is a speaking character in that poem, its narrative must be located within his lifetime, while Lucian is merely referred to in the past tense as a writer whose work is known to the Edessan poet of "Οὔτος Ἐκεῖνος".

Again the thematic catalogue can help. In addition to its historical headings. ('Ancient Days', 'Byzantine Days', 'The Beginnings of Christianity') there are others which fall within the philosophical area of Cavafy's later and simpler classification: 'Fleeting Years', 'Our Art', 'Prisons'. As we have already seen, "Οὔτος Ἐκεῖνος" is listed in the catalogue under 'Ancient Days', but "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί" is to be found under the heading 'Our Art'. This is clear evidence that, at one time at least, Cavafy did not consider "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί" to be a historical poem, but a poem about art; and we can see that, whereas "Οὔτος Ἐκεῖνος" is about a poet (his hard work and aspirations to achieve fame akin to that of Lucian), "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί" is less about its two poets than about poetry. Although the despondent words of the younger poet tell us something about his striving and aspirations, they serve chiefly to provide an opportunity for Cavafy, through the mouthpiece of his tenuously historical character, Theocritus, to make a statement about the supreme value and high status of Poetry.³⁰

30. David Holton remarks (1989: 153) that 'the concept of a City of Ideas with legislators is a trite one,' and suggests that 'Cavafy is mocking the whole thing.' Trite though the concept may be, I am inclined to think that Cavafy took it seriously, as is Jusdanis (1987: 43-4). This poem was written in 1895 when Cavafy himself, like Eumenes, was still on the lower rungs of Poetry's Ladder, and there are many others, including much later poems, such as "Πέρασμα", "Ἐκόμισα εἰς τὴν Τέχνην" and "Μισὴ Ὁρὰ", in which he hints at the superiority of art and artists. Holton supports his view with an argument which seems to confound the worlds of fiction and historical reality: 'If the legislators have allowed this unknown poet on to the first rung, they have been fooled, as history has shown.' The fictional poet Eumenes could not possibly be known to posterity in the real world, and we cannot therefore infer anything about his ultimate success or failure from our own,

If we are right to assume from its position in this collection and the evidence of the thematic catalogue that Cavafy did not think of "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί" as a historical poem, then it would appear that his definition of a historical poem underwent some development, for in terms of the discriminations observable in the later thematic collections "Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί" would almost certainly have qualified as a historical poem. Similarly "Ἐπιθυμίες" might have qualified as a sensual poem. It is the only poem in this collection on an explicitly erotic theme, although both "Φωνές" and "Ἐνας Γέρος" contain what Holton (1989: 153) refers to in connection with the latter as 'heavily veiled eroticism.' "Ἐπιθυμίες" is, however, reflective in manner and without reference to specific experience. "Φωνές", "Ἐνας Γέρος" and the remaining seven poems, which have not yet been mentioned, are all clearly of the philosophical or reflective type, and the whole group of fifteen may be regarded as a sequence of philosophical poems.

I think we can discern in this philosophical sequence a rough subdivision under two of the headings from the thematic catalogue, the first five poems being in the 'Fleeting Years' category and most of the remainder being related in one way or another to the theme of 'Prisons'.

"Κερίά" and "Ἐνας Γέρος" are among those poems which we know to have been listed in the thematic catalogue under the heading 'Fleeting Years'. This seems to have encompassed such subjects as lost youth, lost love, the symptoms of ageing and the approach of death. "Φωνές" and "Ἐπιθυμίες" are clearly associated in theme; "Δέσεις" less clearly so, since although it is concerned with death and loss it does not take the nostalgic or subjective viewpoint of the other poems.

Three out of the following ten poems were listed under the heading 'Prisons': the protagonists of "Τὰ Παράθυρα" and "Τεῖχην" are confined within walls which are clearly metaphorical (prisons of the

or history's, ignorance of his life and works. Holton's assumption that Eumenes' insignificance is part of Cavafy's fiction rules out the interesting possibility that in Eumenes' complaint Cavafy is giving oblique expression to his dissatisfaction with his own work, and, at the same time, to the extent of his ambition.

mind, or situations of exclusion or refuge from society), while in “Ἡ Ψυχὴς τῶν Γερόντων” the old men’s souls are literally imprisoned ‘within their old and worn out bodies’. ‘Prison’ is a metaphor capable of fairly wide application, and might be extended to those doomed by their courageous decision to guard some Thermopylae (No. 9), to ‘the one who made the great refusal’ which drags him down throughout his life (No. 10), to the Trojans trapped in their besieged city (No. 12), to the inhabitants of the imperial city for whom the arrival of the barbarians would have been a solution of, or release from, whatever had been the problems or limitations of their life (No. 14), and to the monotony which is clearly presented as a kind of prison (No. 15). And in “Διακοπή” we mortals are prisoners of our nature which compels us to interrupt the work of the gods. Even Eumenes in “Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί” is in a kind of prison, trapped by the limited vision for which he is upbraided by Theocritus, or perhaps by an ambition beyond his ability to fulfil.

In the opening of this sequence there is a movement from the general (Nos. 1-3) to the particular (Nos. 4 and 5). “Ἡ Ψυχὴς τῶν Γερόντων” returns to the general, and with its obvious relation to “Ἐνὰς Γέρος” bridges the two thematic areas of ‘Fleeting Years’ and ‘Prisons’.

Each of the first three poems has as its title a noun in the plural without an article, and each contains a simile. Similies are not common in Cavafy’s poetry and do not occur again in this sequence (although a number of poems contain literal comparisons introduced by ‘σάν’). “Φωνές” ends with a simile,

σὰ μουσική, τὴν νύχτα, μακρυνή, ποὺ σβύνει,

which is immediately followed by another simile in the first line of “Ἐπιθυμίες”,

Σὰ σώματα ὥραϊα νεκρῶν ποὺ δὲν ἐγέρασαν.

This echoes the phrase (a comparison rather than a simile), ‘σάν τοὺς πεθαμένους’, in “Φωνές”. Both of these are echoed in a more general way by a line in the second stanza of “Κερίά”,

μιά θλιβερὴ γραμμὴ κεριῶν σβυσμένων,

which, though not a simile in form, is parallel to the simile in the first stanza:

σὰ μὰ σειρὰ κεράκια ἀναμένα.

“Κερίά” dwells more on the extinguished than on the lighted candles (9 out of 13 lines are devoted to them). The reference to the candles as ‘σβυσμένα’ (and later as ‘σβυστά’) takes us back to the cognate verb (‘σβύνει’) with which “Φωνές” ends. Voices, desires, candles are all lost, dead, passed, extinguished.

In the last stanza of “Κερίά” the poet does not want to turn round ‘lest [he] should see . . . how rapidly the extinguished candles multiply,’ and in “Ἐνὰς Γέρος” we are shown an old man who is doing just that, looking back and seeing how quickly his life has passed: ‘the time when he was young seems like yesterday.’ The things which he remembers, ‘impulses which he stifled . . . joys he sacrificed . . . each lost opportunity,’ remind us of ‘the desires . . . which passed without being fulfilled’ in “Ἐπιθυμίες”. In the end, like the poet in “Κερίά”, he turns away from the painful sight, his awareness is extinguished in sleep.

In “Δέσις” the ambivalence towards awareness seen in the previous two poems becomes a dichotomy. The ikon knows, while the mother remains ignorant, that her son is already drowned. The candle she lights is, like the lighted candles in “Κερίά”, a symbol of hope for the future, in this case a futile hope.

In “Ἡ Ψυχὴς τῶν Γερόντων”, the first of the ‘Prisons’ poems, the old men’s souls are described as ‘κωμικοτραγικές’, invoking the poetic categories of comedy and tragedy; and this poem is followed by an exchange between two poets in “Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλί”. There, Theocritus says that Eumenes’ words are blasphemous, that is to say, displeasing to the gods; and in the next poem, “Διακοπή”,

The work of the gods we interrupt,
we hasty and artless creatures of the moment.

Haste, or impatience, was part of what prompted Eumenes’ blasphemy. Those who have been admitted as citizens in the city of

ideas are perhaps to be distinguished from the ordinary mortals characterised in "Διακοπή".

"Θερμοπύλες" also suggests that not all mortals are 'creatures of the moment,' since some take a brave stand and remain at their posts, generous and noble, worthy of honour. Such too, we might suppose at first sight, is the man who is able to utter 'the great Yes' in "Che fece . . . il gran rifiuto". Cavafy gives us only a brief glimpse of this type of simple man, respected and confident, who 'appears immediately' and who 'has the Yes ready inside him.' We see him disappearing into the distance, and there is considerable irony in his depiction. Particularly subversive of the apparent sense of the words is the highlighting of 'πέρα' ('onward/further/beyond') by the stanza break which separates it from the verb 'πηγαίνει' ('he goes'):

Φανερώνεται ἀμέσως ὁποῖος τῶχει
ἔτοιμο μέσα του τὸ Ναί, καὶ λέγοντάς το πέρα

πηγαίνει στὴν τιμὴ καὶ στὴν πεποίθησί του.

The title after all suggests the primacy of the one who says 'No', 'the very proper No' ('ἐκεῖνο τ' ὄχι — τὸ σωστό'). With these words Cavafy appears to contradict the phrase, 'per viltà' ('through cowardice'), which he has pointedly omitted from Dante's line. Cavafy seems to have more sympathy with the man who says 'No', and is dragged down by that 'No' throughout his life.

It is not after all the man who says 'Yes' who is like the Greeks at Thermopylae. His life is easy and straightforward, while they are brought down by their decision, for they take a stand against overwhelming odds (and some of them know defeat is certain) when they decide to say 'No' to the enemy. The enemy was at times for Cavafy 'society, totally narrow minded' which 'had all its values wrong,'³¹ and those who 'guard some Thermopylae,' together with the one 'who makes the great refusal,' should, I think, be seen as those who set themselves against the prevailing values of society.

31. From "Μέρες τοῦ 1896", in Keeley and Sherrard's translation.

Ekdawi shows (1993) how preoccupied Cavafy was with the fate of Oscar Wilde, after Wilde's ill-advised and disastrous confrontation with the prevailing social mores and the law. Wilde was imprisoned from 1895 to 1897 for homosexuality and died in exile in Paris in 1901. "Che fece" was written in 1899 and "Θερμοπύλες" in 1901, and it is not inconceivable that these two poems, as well as "Τείχη", "Τὰ Παράθυρα" and others which Ekdawi discusses,³² reflect something of Cavafy's complex response to Wilde's situation. Wilde's exposure, forced upon him though it largely was, may have seemed to Cavafy more honourable than his own secrecy about his homosexuality at that period. Seen from a certain angle Wilde may have appeared to have taken a stand. He had certainly said 'No' to society's values and had been *dragged down* as a result. These two poems are followed in this collection by "Τὰ Παράθυρα", written in 1897, in which the opening of shutters is both desired ('it will be some consolation') and feared:

Perhaps the light will be but one more tyranny.
Who knows what new things it will reveal.

Reveal to whom? There is perhaps some ambiguity here. New things may be revealed to the man in the 'dark rooms,' but he himself may also be revealed to the world outside, may become a public spectacle as Wilde had done, a victim of society's 'tyranny'. Some at least of Cavafy's prisons may be seen as his own self-protecting strategies.

"Τῶδες" presents 'us' as people unlike those who guard Thermopylae. We say 'Yes' and then 'No'. 'We take a stand' ('στεκόμεθα' — compare 'ῥίσαν' in line 2 of "Θερμοπύλες"), 'but when the great crisis comes' (compare 'there comes a day when the great Yes or the great No they must pronounce' in "Che fece"), 'our courage and decision vanish.' Like the speaker in "Τὰ Παράθυρα" Cavafy's Trojans vacillate between courage and fear, confrontation and evasion. This vacillation was perhaps characteristic

32. Among the others is "Μέρες τοῦ 1896", quoted above, and she suggests that the date in the title is a coded reference to Wilde (Ekdawi 1993: 300-2).

of Cavafy's own response to society at the time of writing.

In the original version of this collection circulated by Cavafy, "Τρῶες" is followed by "Περιμένοντας τοὺς Βαρβάρους" which details a very different response of a city to its attackers: its occupants are prepared to avoid confrontation altogether and accept barbarian rule. "Μονοτονία", the last poem in this philosophical sequence, can be read as a gloss on "Περιμένοντας" suggesting that it was the boredom of life in the imperial city which lead its inhabitants to see the barbarians as a solution. Cavafy's notes on "Περιμένοντας" refer to 'enervation' ('ἐκνευρισμός').

Added in the late 1920s, when the collection was no longer in circulation, the poem "Τείχη" — the word (which occurs twice in the last six lines of "Τρῶες") refers to city walls or fortifications rather than the walls of a room — was inserted between "Τρῶες" and "Περιμένοντας", between the defended walls of Troy and the undefended imperial city. The last line of "Τρῶες" reads, 'Bitterly for us Priam and Hecuba weep', and the opening words of "Τείχη" presents a dramatic contrast with this: 'Without consideration, without pity . . .'. And the final line of "Τείχη", 'Imperceptibly they shut me off from the world outside', may be contrasted with "Περιμένοντας" where the people of the city are about to welcome the intrusion of the outside world in the form of the barbarians.

7. 1916-18: historical

In *Poems 1916-1918* (unlike the two earlier³³ collections) all the poems set in or referring to the remote past are grouped together (Nos. 3-16 in Table 4). Although in only six of them (Nos. 4-7, 15 and 16) can the historical context be dated with any degree of precision, these six are very precisely datable and do provide, once again, a clear indication of arrangement in order of historical chronology. Nos. 4-7 cover the period from 157 B.C. to 67 A.D. and the last two in the sequence, Nos. 15 and 16, are dated by Cavafy in their titles to 610 and 655 A.D. respectively.

33. In strictly bibliographical terms *Poems 1905-1915* is later, not earlier, than *Poems 1916-1918* (see Introduction) but here and elsewhere I use these and related expressions in reference to the publication dates of the poems contained in the collections rather than the dates of issue of the collections themselves.

If it is to be maintained that Nos. 3-16 constitute another sequence of historical poems arranged in chronological order of subject matter, then the first poem in the sequence, "Ἐνώπιον τοῦ Ἀγάλματος τοῦ Ἐνδυμίωνος" must be consigned to the period before 157 B.C. But Savidis, following Pontani, suggests (Cavafy 1991: A154) that the period in question is the fourth or fifth century A.D. Pontani's conjecture, however, is tentative and not very soundly based. What he says (in Cavafy 1961: 241) is that 'the allusion to 'the pleasure of ancient times' may point to a rough chronological location in Christian times,' and adds in brackets '4th or 5th century A.D.,' indicating that by 'tempi cristiani' he means not simply the Christian era, but more specifically the period from 312 onwards when Christianity had imperial support and was increasingly promoted at the expense of pagan cults. This interpretation of the poem's context is certainly plausible, but by no means compelling. In referring to the pleasure of an earlier period, the rich pilgrim from Alexandria may be expressing no more than a vague yearning for an idealised past, conceivable at any time, and there is nothing to prevent our locating him in the years between the foundation of Alexandria in the late fourth century B.C. and 157 B.C. (the date of the events in the following poem). Although the shrine of Endymion on Mount Latmus is only attested by authors writing later than this (Strabo, Pausanias, Quintus Smyrnaeus), the adjacent town of Heracleia-under-Latmus, which, according to an ancient inscription found there in the nineteenth century, claimed Endymion as its founder, had existed at least since classical times.³⁴

No. 12, "Ἐν Πόλει τῆς Ὀσροηνῆς", should probably be located within the lifetime of the kingdom of Osroene, i.e. not later than 216 A.D. No detail in Nos. 8-11 precludes their being located in the period defined by Nos. 7 and 12, i.e. 67-216 A.D. Between No. 12 and the two poems dated by Cavafy to the seventh century are two poems on Christian epitaphs (Nos. 13 and 14). Their position lends support

34. Originally known as Latmus, it was refounded in the mid-fourth century B.C. as Heracleia (Bean and Cook 1957: 140). For a discussion of the inscription and the references in ancient authors see Robert 1978: 481-90.

to the view that, despite the indeterminate date of so many of the poems, the whole sequence of historical poems is ordered chronologically by subject matter. Although there were Christian cemeteries before the fourth century, they were far more numerous thereafter, and, generally speaking, Christianity does not figure in Cavafy's poetry in contexts earlier than the fourth century, when it began to pose a threat to the values of 'Hellenism'.

There is a remarkable unity of theme among these historical poems. Three of them include the word 'tomb' ('τάφος') in their title and two of these are in the form of epitaphs. "Εν τῷ Μηνί Ἀθύρ" describes the reading of a partly obliterated epitaph, and of the two dated poems at the end of the sequence one concerns the writing of an epitaph for Ammones while in the other Aemilianus Monaës' proud boast about his metaphorical armour in the first two stanzas is turned into a kind of ironical epitaph by the reference to his premature death in the third.³⁵ Other poems in this sequence are on related themes: the death and burial of an unknown young man in a Syrian harbour town (No. 8) and the tribute to the beauty of the wounded body of Remon (No. 12). The dead, or wounded, in these poems are all young men and in most cases the poem includes some reference to their beauty; and they are all fictional characters. There are only four poems in this sequence (Nos. 4-7) which deal with non-fictional characters. Two of these, "Ἀριστόβουλος" and "Καίσαριών", depict beautiful young men who were murdered for political reasons, and in "Ἡ Διορία τοῦ Νέρωνος" Nero is shown still young and appreciating the pleasures of the flesh, but oblivious of his impending fate. Beauty is the chief characteristic of the statue of Endymion (No. 3) and of the unidentified Olympian god who walks in the streets of Seleucia (No. 9). Thus all but one poem (No. 4) are preoccupied with either death, or beauty, or, in most cases, both.

The minimal historical content and the imaginary characters and situations of many of these poems prompt the speculation that for a poem to be set in a more or less identifiable historical context, without making allegorical use of that context, was sufficient for

35. Contrast Keeley's reference to the *third* stanza as an ironic epitaph (1976: 86-87).

Cavafy to classify it as a historical poem. Two poems in this sequence, "Καίσαριών" and "Εν τῷ Μηνί Ἀθύρ", do not, however, meet these criteria. Καίσαριών relates an imagined encounter in the poet's recent past ('last night') with a named historical character, who is not only as the poet's art 'makes' him ('beautiful and sensitive') but also, at the same time, as he 'would have been in conquered Alexandria.' Thus an erotic fantasy and an act of historical imagination coalesce in Caesarion's appearance in the poet's room. Beaton says of this poem that it 'eludes [his] definition of the historical poems, and is like no other "erotic" poem of Cavafy's, but shares features of both;' and not surprisingly he concludes that 'although it refers to history, "Caesarion" is not a historical poem.'³⁶ The 1927 note against Malanos, attributed to Cavafy (see Introduction), warns that 'the historical area sometimes approaches so closely to the sensual . . . that it is difficult to classify certain of their poems,' and "Καίσαριών" is clearly a case in point. In this collection it has been placed, as we can observe, among historical rather than sensual poems: it is preceded by three poems and followed by a further ten poems which, with the exception of "Εν τῷ Μηνί Ἀθύρ" which is discussed below, are set in remote historical periods without reference to the present. This does strongly suggest that Cavafy classified "Καίσαριών" as a historical poem. It would certainly have been more out of place among the sensual poems in this collection than it is among the historical, since many of the historical poems have far less historical content than "Καίσαριών", and most of them contain some erotic element.

In "Εν τῷ Μηνί Ἀθύρ" the poet is attempting, in the present, to make out an ancient inscription on a tombstone. The poem consists entirely of fragments of the inscription and remarks about the difficulty of deciphering it, except for the penultimate line, where the poet comments, 'It seems to me that Leucius' — whose tombstone it is — 'was greatly loved,' with the implication, reinforced when we read

36. Beaton 1983: 32 and 33. "Καίσαριών" does however accord well with Beaton's categorisation (later in the same article) of the historical poems as 'a testimony to the rational confrontation between the creative imagination, whose sphere is the present moment, and the consciousness of the past as always beyond the reach of that moment' (1983: 43).

the poem in the context of this sequence whose poems dwell on death and beauty, that he was also *lovable*. This poem, which I do not think anyone would suggest was other than a historical poem, follows, on a smaller scale, the same progression which we see in "Καίσαριών". "Καίσαριών" begins with the poet scanning a book of Ptolemaic inscriptions and coming by chance on 'a reference, brief and insignificant, to King Caesarion.' From this brief reference he conjures an erotic vision of the young king. In "Ἐν τῷ Μηνί Αἰθῶρ" the reference in the inscription to the grief of Leucius' friends prompts the comment, 'he was greatly loved,' which contains within it the germ of an erotic vision which the poem does not develop.

"Καίσαριών" also has close thematic links with a poem outside the historical sequence, the first poem in this collection, "Ἀπ' τῆς Ἑννιά". Both relate events in the poet's lamplit room at night; and both concern youthful apparitions, of Caesarion in one case and of the poet's young body in the other; and each apparition brings with it intimations of both sensuality and grief.

8. 1916-18: philosophical

"Ἀπ' τῆς Ἑννιά" is one of only two poems (the other is "Νόησις") which come before the historical sequence in the 1916-18 collection. The twelve poems which come after the historical sequence are readily identifiable as sensual (or, more precisely, erotic), and on the basis of what we have seen of the organisation of the two earlier collections we would expect to be able to describe the first two poems in this collection as philosophical. In fact, it would not have been surprising to have found them among the erotic poems at the end of the collection. The subject of "Νόησις" is closely related to that of "Ὀμνύει", which is among the sensual poems in the 1905-15 collection. "Ὀμνύει" records, in the narrative present, but in the third person, what the reader may take to have been the poet's own experience:

Ὀμνύει κάθε τόσο ν' ἀρχίσει πὸ καλὴ ζωὴ.
 Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἔλθ' ἡ νύχτα . . .
 . . . στὴν ἴδια
 μοιραία χαρά, χαμένος, ξαναπιαίνει.

In "Νόησις" he looks back on this experience with an *understanding* of the importance of his youthful sexual experiences for the development of his art. The unconscious directives of Art were more powerful than the conscious promptings of morality, and it was for this reason, he says, that 'the repentance was never lasting.' What is primary in "Ὀμνύει" is the experience, while in "Νόησις" it is the understanding of that experience, and it would not therefore be surprising if Cavafy thought of this as a philosophical rather than a sensual poem. 'Understanding' is after all a central philosophic category.

"Ἀπ' τῆς Ἑννιά" leads very naturally into "Νόησις". The last words of the former poem, 'τὰ χρόνια', are the first words of the latter; and the whole opening phrase of the latter, 'Τὰ χρόνια τῆς νεότητός μου', has the same syntactical structure as, and rhymes with the line, 'Τὸ εἶδωλον τοῦ νέου σώματός μου', which occurs twice in the former.

"Νόησις" contrasts the poet's present understanding with his lack of understanding at the time of the experiences referred to, i.e. in his youth. "Ἀπ' τῆς Ἑννιά" also relates the poet's present to his youth, through the memories which the apparition of his young body brings before his eyes, memories both of pleasure ('περασμένην ἡδονή — τί τολμερὴ ἡδονή!') and of sad events ('τὰ λυπητερά'). The main focus of this poem is not on the erotic but on the passage of time.

Whatever their precise relations to Cavafy's own experience, these are both, from a formal point of view, personal poems. If Cavafy did classify them as philosophical, as their position in this collection may indicate, it must be said that among the philosophical poems of the 1905-15 collection only the first stanza of "Ἡ Πόλις" offers anything comparable; and there the personal statement is not made directly by the poet to the reader, but is presented as the words of the poem's addressee quoted to him by the speaker. To find direct personal statements in philosophical poems we have to look further back, to *Poems 1910*, to "Φωνές", "Κερίά", "Τὰ Παράθυρα" and "Τεῖχη". Yet how far removed is "Ἀπ' τῆς Ἑννιά" from the morbid sensibility of the two 'Prisons' poems, how much more positive than "Κερίά" in its relation to the past. More pertinent is

the comparison with "Φωνές", where the voices perform a similar function to that of the poet's young body in the later poem, and like that apparition they come unbidden ('Sometimes in our dreams they speak'). The voices 'of those who have died or of those who are, for us, lost like the dead' must inevitably bring sad memories, but also 'with the sound of them there return sounds from the first poetry of our life' — a veiled reference perhaps to youthful erotic experience.³⁷ The conjunction in "Ἀπ' τὲς Ἐννιά" of 'family griefs' and 'separations' recalls the similar conjunction in "Φωνές" of 'those who have died' and 'those who are . . . lost'; and 'sentiments of the dead' recalls 'voices . . . of those who have died.' "Φωνές" was placed first in Cavafy's earliest thematic collection, and, given the affinities between the two poems, the position of "Ἀπ' τὲς Ἐννιά" at the head of the 1916-18 collection may owe something to that fact. But, with its very specific juxtaposition of sensuality and grief in the reliving of the past, "Ἀπ' τὲς Ἐννιά" serves as an ideal introduction to the whole collection: the frequent coincidence of eroticism and loss through death in the historical poems has already been noted; and the recollection of youthful erotic experience, sometimes tinged with sorrow, is one of the main preoccupations of the sensual poems, in some of which the actual process of recollection figures, as it does in "Ἀπ' τὲς Ἐννιά".

9. 1916-18: sensual

The first three poems in the sensual or erotic group of the 1916-18 collection beginning at No. 17 (Table 4) are all short and rather general, concerned variously with the relationship between beauty, pleasure, memory and poetry. In the first the poet addresses himself in the second person, in the other two he speaks in the first person. There are striking verbal links between them of the kind observed elsewhere:

Προσπάθησε να τὰ κρατήσεις, ποιητή (“Όταν Διεγείρονται”)
 τῶν ὥρων
 ποὺ πῦρα καὶ ποὺ κράτηξα τὴν ἡδονὴν ὡς τὴν ἡθελα (“Ἡδονή”)
 Πρόσωπα τῆς ἀγάπης, ὅπως τᾶθελεν
 ἢ ποιήσις μου (“Ἔτσι πολὺ ἀτένισα —”).

37. See Note 47 in Section 10.

These first three poems are followed by another group of three in which we move from erotic experience in general to particular experiences, but related in the third person, and thus distanced from the poet himself. Each poem contains a clear reference to the illicit or abnormal nature of the sexuality involved, and these references are couched in closely related terms. In "Ἐν τῇ Ὀδῷ" a man is walking as if still hypnotised 'ἀπ' τὴν ἄνομη ἡδονή, ἀπὸ τὴν πολὺ ἄνομῃ ἡδονῇ τοῦ ἀπέκτησε.' In "Ἡ Προθήκη τοῦ Καπνοπωλείου" two people are standing in a crowd outside a tobacconist's. By chance their eyes meet and clearly express 'τὴν παράνομην ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς τῶν.' And of the young man in "Πέρασμα" we are told, 'τὸ σῶμα του νικᾷ ἔκνομη ἐρωτικῇ μέθῃ.'

The remaining six poems are all apparently based on the poet's personal recollections, and are all in the first person, except for "Θυμήσου, Σώμα . . .", in which the poet addresses his own body. In these first- and second-person poems, which the reader would be likely to associate more closely with Cavafy's own experience than the previous three poems in the third person, there is no reference to the 'illicit' nature of the desires, nothing in fact which tells us that the poet's memories are of male lovers. Each of the first four involves a particular stimulus to memory: reading an old letter ("Ἐν Ἐσπέρᾳ"), looking at a half-grey opal ("Ἐκρίζα"), passing by a once familiar house ("Κάτω ἀπ' τὸ Σπίτι"), seeing someone who exactly resembles a lover of twenty years ago ("Τὸ Διπλανὸν Τραπεζί"). In each of these four poems the act of recollection is at least as important, as much a part of the poem, as that which is recollected. "Θυμήσου, Σώμα . . .", although it deals with remembered encounters in general, suggests that recollected experience may actually have become richer in the memory with the passage of time, so that desires which were not fulfilled are hardly distinguishable now from those that were. It begins,

Body, remember not only how much you were loved
not only the beds where you lay,

which is essentially what the poet has been remembering in the previous four poems (as well as in the first two poems in this sensual

sequence and the two philosophical poems); and it continues,

but also those desires which for you
shone in the eye so clearly,
and trembled in the voice — and some
chance impediment frustrated them.

This is precisely the kind of experience which is related in the last poem in the collection, "Μέρες τοῦ 1903", in which the 'poetic eyes' (possessed, lost and never found again) figure so prominently.³⁸ Thus by its position in the sequence "Θυμῆσου, Σῶμα . . ." acts as a bridge, articulating the distinction between the four poems which precede it and the single poem which follows.

10. Conclusions and further reflections

At the end of his study of Cavafy's self-publication Savidis poses four questions relating to the thematic collections:

- 1) Why did the 1916-18 collection not include the poems of the 1907-15 collection?
- 2) Why did the 1905-15 collection not include the poems of the 1916-18 collection?
- 3) If Cavafy had lived longer, would he have proceeded to combine the 1916-18 and 1905-15 collections in a single thematic collection which would have also included poems earlier than 1905 and later than 1918?
- 4) Or would he perhaps have reprinted the 1905-15 collection, possibly augmented by earlier poems, and proceeded in parallel to enlarge the 1916-18 collection with poems published after 1918?³⁹

38. It might be felt that 'ἀποληθέντα' in line 4 carries the implication of sexual fulfilment, but the poem seems more coherent if this is taken to refer only to a mental possession, to the experience of the chance meeting of eyes, the mutual recognition of desire which was not followed up ('ποῦ ἔτοι εὐκόλα παραίτησα'), since the emphasis — 'δὲν τὰ ἡῶρα πιά' is repeated three times — is on the agony with which 'the poetic eyes, the pale face, those lips' were afterwards desired but never found again.

39. Savidis 1966: 207-8. In translating Savidis' questions I have substituted 'the 1916-18 collection' etc. for dates plus reference number, or reference number only, in the original.

Savidis immediately dismisses the second question with a simple, practical, even banal answer: when the 1905-15 collection was printed in 1930 Cavafy still had a large number of copies of the 1916-18 collection which had only been printed in the previous year. A similar answer could be given to the first question and Savidis does in fact give it four pages later. However I do not believe these questions can be disposed of so easily.

Poems 1916-1918 was issued in 1929, the eleventh year after the first publication of the latest of the poems it contains. In those eleven years Cavafy had continued to expand the earlier thematic collection which, by 1926, with the replacement of *Poems 1908-1914* by *Poems 1907-1915*, had already reached the threshold of the poems which later formed the 1916-18 collection. Given the long delay, the long periods of gestation of these collections, the decision which became evident in 1929 to present the poems of the years 1916-18 as a separate thematic sequence must surely be regarded as a well considered and long-term strategy, rather than a short-term expedient, a mere question of economy. Had Cavafy's long-term aim been, and remained, the gradual enlargement of a single thematic collection to encompass, ultimately, all the published poems which he wanted to preserve, the separate printing of *Poems 1916-1918* would be difficult to explain. The poems of those years were already in print and available together in his chronological collection *Poems 1916-1926/29*, and there can hardly have been any urgency to circulate those poems in another temporary arrangement, beyond the need to reduce the bulk of the chronological collection (and this hardly seems an adequate explanation⁴⁰ for the production of a sequence as artfully constructed as *Poems 1916-1918*).

In addressing himself to his first question, Savidis asks whether Cavafy regarded 1915 as a significant break in his poetic or thematic development, and finds no evidence that he did so. Against such a supposition he sets Cavafy's repeated stress on the unity of his work, and he quotes (1966: 209) from a note Cavafy added to the draft of

40. Although it seems to be offered as such by Keeley and Savidis (in Cavafy 1972: 11), giving the misleading impression that it was the chronological collections which were of prime importance.

a letter to Lapathiotis dated 1922 to the effect that 'the whole body of the poems is not separated into Special Collections.' He cites this as if it were an unequivocal statement of fact, but when we look at it in its context, which Savidis has already supplied (1966: 63), it turns out to be part of an apparently unfulfilled condition:

Πῶς μπορῶ νὰ πῶ γιὰ τὸ μέλλον;
Μπορεῖ νὰ θέλω νὰ κάμω μιὰ διαίρεσιν συγκεκλιμένην ἀπὸ μόνον
ἱστορικά, αἰφνης. —
Στέκοντας ὅπου τὸ ὅλον σῶμα τῶν ποιημάτων δὲν χωρίζεται εἰς
Συλλογὲς Ἰδιαιτερές, μὲ κάθε νέον ποίημα ἢ κατάταξις ἢ σωστή, ἢ κατὰ
θέματα, θὰ ἄλλαζε.

'Given that the whole body of the poems is not separated into Special Collections, with each new poem the proper arrangement according to themes *would* change.' This refers to an ideal and hypothetical situation, since at the time of writing all of Cavafy's poems had not been (and never were, in his lifetime) gathered into a unity, but were printed in separate collections, although only one *thematic* collection (*Poems 1908-1914*) was then in circulation. The unity of the work was not in doubt but the presentation of the work as a physical unity in a single thematic collection remained problematic.

What precisely Cavafy meant by 'Special Collections' is probably explained by the previous sentences: 'How can I speak for the future? I might want, suddenly, to make a division consisting solely of historical [poems].' From this it appears that in 1922 Cavafy was considering the possibility of separating, for the purposes of circulation or publication, some or all of the historical poems from the philosophical and sensual ones. No such division was ever realised, but in 1920 Cavafy made a division of his work along chronological lines, when he chose to circulate *Poems 1916-1918* alongside *Poems 1907-1915*; and this division was reinforced in 1930 when he replaced *Poems 1907-1915* by *Poems 1905-1915*.

Savidis' answer to the third question (would Cavafy have moved towards a single thematic collection) is 'probably', and consequently his answer to the fourth (would Cavafy have enlarged both thematic collections while retaining the division at 1915/16) has to be 'probably not'. I am inclined to reverse these probabilities, while narrowing

the gap between them. In other words, it seems to me less likely that Cavafy would have attempted a single thematic collection than that he would have continued to enlarge the two thematic collections which were in circulation in the last few years of his life; and both alternatives seem less likely than a third (not suggested by Savidis), namely, that Cavafy would have produced a separate thematic collection (or collections) made up of poems published after 1918. The whole issue is largely speculative but not therefore irrelevant, since it concerns the way we view the thematic collections, and their significance in the development of Cavafy's art.

There is one piece of evidence which lends support to Savidis' answer to the third question. In some copies of *Poems 1905-1915* the title pages were printed without the fourth digit of each date ('Ποιήματα 190 -191 ') and these have been added by hand (Savidis 1966: 211 and 90n). It may be, as Savidis says, that this is a significant indication that, in 1930, the poet had not excluded the possibility of combining this collection with *Poems 1916-1918* and including poems earlier than 1905 and later than 1918. The single all-embracing thematic collection may have remained as an ideal, but there were perhaps insurmountable artistic difficulties which stood in the way of its realisation. There may come optimal points in the development of a thematic collection by the method which Cavafy adopted,⁴¹ beyond which further enlargement would only impair the internal coherence of the sequences.

The historical sequences, where the thematic arrangement is based on the simple objective principle of historical chronology, could easily have been extended indefinitely; but the enlargement of the philosophical

41. Cavafy's method did itself develop. *Poems 1904* contained only a selection of the poems Cavafy had published by that date. However, the seven poems added to the 1904 collection to produce *Poems 1910* constituted all the poems Cavafy had first published in the years 1905-09. This established the principle which Cavafy followed in all subsequent thematic collections. Having defined the period which was to give the collection its title, he then incorporated all the poems first published during that period. The only leeway he allowed himself was to include extra poems from beyond the end of the defined period. *Poems 1907-1915* (and therefore *Poems 1905-1915*) contains four poems probably first published in January 1916, and *Poems 1916-1918* three poems first published in January 1919 (see Column 2 in Tables 3 and 4).

and sensual sequences, organised according to more complex, subtle and subjective perceptions, would tend to become increasingly problematic. The more satisfactory such a thematic sequence appears, the more difficult it is to place a new poem in such a way that the gains outweigh the losses. The greater the number of poems considered, the more elusive becomes their 'proper arrangement according to themes.' Text is one-dimensional, and in a sequence no poem can stand next to more than two others. A fully satisfactory arrangement which gave expression to all the thematic links and verbal resonances which the arranger may have perceived, would require some two- or even three-dimensional structure. In a linear text all one can hope for is an optimal arrangement, and the larger the group of poems to be arranged the more difficult it is to judge what constitutes that optimum.

In addition to this formal limitation, imposed by the linearity of text, considerations of significant stages in the development of his poetry may have inclined Cavafy to accept, if somewhat reluctantly, the artistic necessity of presenting his work as a series of separate collections. The addition of "Τείχη" to *Poems 1910* in the Sengopoulos manuscript suggests that even in the late 1920s Cavafy felt that this collection still had some value as a way of presenting his early poetry, despite its increasing overlap with the later thematic collection he was then developing.

Perhaps too much has been made of 1910/11 as a turning point in Cavafy's poetic development. The boundaries of the thematic collections offer other thresholds worth considering: 1904/05, 1915/16 and 1918/19.⁴²

If Cavafy had actually attempted to extend *Poems 1905-1915* back by just two years to 1903, he would have had to add to the historical sequence "Ἀπιστία" (published 1904). This is the last published poem in historical⁴³ rather than allegorical mode which he based on

42. Savidis has much to say about the significance of 1910/11, and yet, in discussing Seferis' view that from about 1910 all Cavafy's poems should be read 'as a single poem in progress,' he suggests that this chronological threshold should be put back at least five years to include all the poems of the 1905-15 collection (1966: 198).

43. This assumes that neither "Τρώες" nor "Ἡ Σατραπεία" nor "Ἰθάκη" has any claim to be considered a historical poem.

myth. In fact from 1905 onwards no published historical poem is set in any period earlier than the foundation of the Hellenistic kingdoms,⁴⁴ and "Ἀπιστία" would not have fitted well at the head of the historical sequence in the 1905-15 collection.⁴⁵ He would also have had to integrate into the philosophical sequence five poems, including "Φωνές", "Ἐπιθυμίες" and "Τὰ Παράθυρα". The direct expression of nostalgia in the first two is not found in any poem of the 1905-15 collection, and although "Τὰ Παράθυρα" has affinities with "Ἡ Πόλις",⁴⁶ there are significant differences between them. In "Ἡ Πόλις" the despair is not expressed directly as though it were the poet addressing the reader. Instead the words of the despairing and imprisoned character are quoted back to him by a second persona. In "Τὰ Παράθυρα" the speaker is torn between desire for, and fear of, liberation from his dark prison, while in "Ἡ Πόλις" the one who longs to escape is confronted by the speaker with the impossibility of escape, for the prison is the consequence of past actions. Coming to terms with reality and living as fully as possible within its limitations are key notes of the philosophical sequence in the 1905-15 collection. (See in particular "Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον", "Ἰθάκη" and "Ὅσο Μπορεῖς"). Some earlier poems, such as "Che fece . . . il gran rifiuto" and "Θερμοπύλες", would have fitted well enough into this sequence, but not "Φωνές", "Ἐπιθυμίες" or "Τὰ Παράθυρα", which embody a more nostalgic, indulgent and at times self-pitying sensibility, the sensibility of 'Fleeting Years' and 'Prisons'.

A comparison of "Ἐπιθυμίες" with "Θυμήσου, Σῶμα . . ."

44. "Ὁ Δαρείος", published in 1920, might be considered an exception. However, although it refers to a poem about the Persian king Darius I (521-486 B.C.), its primary temporal context is that of the fictional poet Phernazes, composing that poem in the first century B.C. Similarly, in "Ὁ Δημάρατος" the discussion of the character of Demaratus (a contemporary of Darius I) is presented as the work of a young sophist in the time of Porphyry (3rd-4th century A.D.).

45. The mythological content of "Ἡ Κηδεία τοῦ Σαρπηδόνοιο" may be a further reason why Cavafy chose to treat it as a poem of 1898 rather than 1908, justifying its non-inclusion in *Poems 1908-1914* (see Introduction).

46. An earlier form, "Πάλι στὴν Ἰδέα Πόλι", was listed with "Τὰ Παράθυρα" under 'Prisons' in the thematic catalogue.

(published 1918) shows just how far some of Cavafy's attitudes changed with time and how difficult it would have been to combine all the published poems in a satisfactory single thematic sequence, for the two poems present irreconcilable points of view. In "Ἐπιθυμίες" the mood is one of regret, in which unfulfilled desires are compared to the beautiful bodies of those who died young, while in "Θυμῆσου, Σῶμα . . .", at a greater distance in time ('now that all this is finally in the past'), frustrated desires are hardly distinguishable in the memory from those that were fulfilled. Already in some of the erotic poems of the 1905-15 collection the sense of loss, the romantic pessimism which dominates Cavafy's earlier poetry, the 'Fleeting Years' mentality, has begun to give way to an almost celebratory approach to the recovery of past pleasure through memory and imagination (see in particular "Μιὰ Νύχτα" and "Ἐπέστρεφε"). This same approach is found again in many poems in the 1916-18 collection, but new in this later collection are the references to poetry as a means by which the past may be preserved in the present (see "Ὅταν Διεγείρονται", and compare "Νὰ μείνει", published in 1919), and even as an unconscious force shaping that past experience itself ("Νόησις" and "Ἔτσι πολύ ἀτένισα —").⁴⁷

Another and highly significant difference between the erotic poems of the two collections, 1905-15 and 1916-18, has already been referred to. In the 1905-15 collection we can observe a definite progression towards a more explicit avowal of the kind of passion which concerned Cavafy, a stage where it is characterised as *bold*, *powerful* and *not ordinary*. In the 1916-18 collection the *boldness* is reiterated in the first poem, "Ἀπ' τῆς Ἐννιά" ('καὶ περασμένη ἡδονή — τί τολμερὴ ἡδονή!'), and the distinction from *ordinary* love is very strongly emphasised in "Ἡδονῇ" ('ἔμένα, ποῦ ἀποστράφηκα τὴν κάθε ἀπόλαυσιν ἐρώτων τῆς ρουτίνας'), but this later collection also introduces the more revealing concept of the *illicit* nature of the passions involved.

47. The function of 'poetry' in these two poems may help to elucidate the cryptic phrase in "Φωνές", 'sounds from the first poetry of our life', as a reference to earliest erotic experience (see Section 8).

In responding to the suggestion that Cavafy might have preferred to retain the option of circulating his poems up to 1915 separately 'for fear of puritanical reaction,' Savidis says (1966: 211-2) that although *Poems 1916-1918* contains a greater number of 'daring' poems, these are not 'more daring' than the earlier ones. This does not take account of the greater candour involved in the use of the terms 'ἄνομη', 'παράνομη' and 'ἔκνομη', and the attention drawn to them by placing together, in the 1916-18 collection, the three poems in which they occur. The fear of puritanical reaction need not be taken seriously in relation to 1929, the year in which *Poems 1916-1918* was first circulated, but for artistic reasons Cavafy may well have preferred to keep these poems separate from the carefully prepared introduction to his erotic poems which we have seen in the sensual sequence of *Poems 1905-1915*. With the exception of "Ἐπιθυμίες" all earlier poems with explicit erotic reference either remained unpublished or had been repudiated by the poet, so that *Poems 1905-1915* really does provide the definitive introduction to Cavafy's erotic poetry (if we accept that the thematic collections were the definitive form in which he wanted to present his work).

Poems 1916-1918 is, by contrast, pervaded by the erotic. The two poems at the beginning of that collection which I have tentatively identified as philosophical both contain erotic references, as do nine out of the 14 historical poems, even if only to the beauty of some young man or god,⁴⁸ compared with only two out of 16 historical poems in the 1905-15 collection.⁴⁹ *Poems 1916-1918* is not quite typical of the later poetry in this respect. A quick survey of the historical poems which Cavafy published between 1919 and 1932 indicates that only about one third of them are on erotic themes or contain erotic references. Nevertheless, *Poems 1916-1918* heralds a distinct and permanent shift in the balance of Cavafy's interests in the historical poetry.

Another remarkable characteristic of the historical poems in the 1916-18 collection is that the great majority of them,⁵⁰ while located

48. Nos. 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 15 in Table 4.

49. Nos. 24 and 26 in Table 3.

50. 10 out of 14: Nos. 3 and 8-16 in Table 4.

in more or less definable historical periods, deal exclusively with fictional personae and make no reference to any specific historical situations. While many of the historical poems published after 1918 are concerned primarily with fictional characters, almost all of them contain some reference to historical persons or events.

It seems likely that Cavafy, appreciating the distinctive nature of his output in the years 1916-18, would have wanted to separate the 28 poems of those years, and keep them separate, from both his earlier and his later work.

In the later erotic poems there is one further advance towards greater frankness. Up to and including *Poems 1916-1918* (despite the references to *illicit* love), in no published poem, whether in the first or third person, which alludes to a sexual encounter (and not just the admiration of male beauty) in a contemporary or near contemporary setting, is there an unambiguous disclosure that both persons involved are male. This is achieved by avoiding the direct application of nouns, pronouns and adjectives to at least one of the individuals, and by reference to parts of the body in place of the person. However, in a few poems published after 1918 this last vestige of reticence is dropped and pronouns, adjectives and even the title in one case,⁵¹ inform the reader unequivocally that Cavafy is writing of sexual relations between men.

Poems 1916-1918 is further distinguished from the earlier poetry by its total lack of philosophical poems of the didactic kind found in *Poems 1910* and *Poems 1905-1915*, even though the last of such poems, "Ὁ Θεόδοτος" and "Σοφοὶ δὲ Προσιόντων", were only published in 1915. After 1915 generalisations about life, the allegorical use of history, and imperatives addressed to the reader never reappear in Cavafy's published poetry. When the reflective mode appears in the later poetry it does so mainly in the context of the erotic, and refers to the relation between experience, memory, ageing and the art of poetry. It is doubtful whether there are any poems published after 1918 which Cavafy would have classified as philosophical had

51. "Δύο νέοι, 23 ἔως 24 ἐτῶν", published 1927. Other similarly frank poems are "Τὸ 25ον ἔτος τοῦ βίου του" (1925), "Ἐνας νέος, τῆς Τέχνης τοῦ Λόγου — στὸ 24ον ἔτος του" (1928) and "Ὁραία λουλούδια κι ἄσπρα ὡς ταίριαζαν πολὺ" (1929).

he ever made a thematic collection of his later work. Perhaps "Ἐκομισα εἰς τὴν Τέχνην" comes nearest, but it is closer in spirit to "Ὅταν Διεγείρονται" or "Ἐτσι πολὺ ἀτένισα —" (in the sensual section of *Poems 1916-1918*) than to "Νόησις" or "Ἀπ' τὲς Ἑννιά".

If we look in broad terms at the thematic collections, in relation to the three 'areas', we see that the historical is the only constant factor. *Poems 1910* has more philosophical than historical poems and lacks the sensual altogether (except for "Ἐπιθυμίες" among the philosophical poems); in *Poems 1905-1915* the three areas are fairly evenly balanced, although the historical poems are most numerous and more than half of the philosophical poems are historically based; and in *Poems 1916-1918* the philosophical has almost disappeared and, while the historical poems are more numerous than the sensual, most of them have erotic undertones at least. Thus each collection is dominated by a different 'area', and taken together they show a progression in Cavafy's work in which the historical first encroaches on the philosophical, and then the sensual encroaches on both the historical and the philosophical, before the latter disappears altogether after 1918. Following the dominance of the erotic or sensual in the 1916-18 collection, a fairly even balance between the sensual and the historical is maintained throughout the poems published in the last fifteen years of Cavafy's life.

I have already referred twice to the anonymous 1927 note against Malanos, which has been attributed to Cavafy. I return to it now because it contains, I suspect, some indications of Cavafy's intentions in producing the thematic collections. 'Each new poem adds something to its area,' we read,

in one case a lot, in another a little. Sometimes poems enter their area to fill a gap. Sometimes the light of a new poem gently penetrates the half-light of an older one (light in one poem, half-light in another — not haphazardly, but in accordance with the most careful poetic economy).⁵²

52. Quoted in Savidis 1966: 209-10.

I have followed both Keeley (1976: 186) and Kolaitis (in Cavafy 1988: I, xiii) in translating 'ποιητική οικονομία' by the obvious but vague term, *poetic economy*, but in a literary context 'οικονομία' can also have the more precise connotation of *structure* or *organisation*, and perhaps here Cavafy is alluding to the thematic arrangement of the poems, either as imperfectly realised in the published thematic collections, or, more likely, as ideally conceived, 'the proper arrangement according to themes' which would be able to embrace the entire oeuvre and which would change with the addition of each new poem. In any case, it is in the thematic collections that we can see most clearly at work the processes he describes: it was in the development of those collections that poems, as text, quite literally *entered their area* and *added something to it* (the reference is still to the three areas, philosophical, historical and sensual); and it is in those collections that the illumination of one poem by another can be most readily observed, for it is there that Cavafy has presented a substantial part of his work 'in accordance with the most careful poetic organisation,' with, we may suppose, precisely that end in view.

King's College, London

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TABLE 1
THE INTERRELATION OF THE THEMATIC COLLECTIONS
(excluding POEMS 1916-1918)

[illegible]

TABLE 2
POEMS 1910

	1	2	3	4	5
	Ref. No. and title	Date first issued	Date first written	Style where not third person	Date of historical subject matter
PHILOSOPHICAL	1. Φωὸς	1904	1894	1st plural	
	2. Ἐπιθυμίες	1905*	1904		
	3. Κερία	1899	1893	1st sing.	
	4. Ἐνας Γέρος	1897	1894		
	5. Δέησις	1898	1896		
	6. Ἡ ψυχὴς τῶν Γερόντων	1901	1898		
	7. Τὸ Πρῶτο Σκαλλ	1899	1895		c.270 B.C.
	8. Διακοπή	1901	1900	1st plural	mythological
	9. Θερμοπόλες	1903	1901		480 B.C.
	10. Che fece... il gran rifiuto	1901	1899		
	11. Τὰ Παράθυρα	1903	1897	1st sing.	
	12. Τρώες	1905	1900	1st plural	Homeric
	13. (Τέλιχη)	1897	1896	1st sing.	
	14. Περιμένοντας τοὺς Βαρβάρους	1904	1898		late Roman, 75th century A.D.
	15. Μουστοῦλα	1908	1898		
HISTORICAL	16. Ἀπιστία	1904	1903		mythological
	17. Ἡ Κηδεία τοῦ Σαρπηδόου	1898	1892?		Homeric
	18. Τὰ Ἄλογα τοῦ Ἀχιλλεύς	1897	1896		Homeric
	19. Ἡ Συνοδεία τοῦ Διονύσου	1907	1903		before 211 ■.C. (fall of Syracuse)
	20. Ὁ Βασιλεὺς Δημήτριος	1906	1900		288 B.C.
	21. Τὰ βήματα	1909	1893		59-68 A.D.
	22. Οὗτος Ἐκεῖνος	1909	1898		after c.180 A.D. (death of Lucian)

* This poem was first issued in 1905 (in *Poems 1904*), but was regarded by Cavafy as a poem of 1904.

TABLE 3
POEMS 1905-1915*

	1	2	3	4	5
	Ref. No. and title	Date first issued	Date first written	Style where not third person	Date of historical subject matter
PHILOSOPHICAL	1. Ἡ Πόλις	1910	1894	2nd sing.	465-425 B.C. (Artaxerxes I)
	2. Ἡ Σατραπεία	1910	1905	2nd sing.	
	3. Σοφοὶ δὲ Προσιόντων	1915	1896		
	4. Μάρτια Εἶδοι	1910	1906	2nd sing.	
	5. Τελειωμένα	1911	1910	1st plural	
	6. Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀνθρώπων	1911	1910	2nd sing.	
	7. Ὁ Θεόδοτος	1915	?	2nd sing.	
	8. Μονοτονία	1908	1898		
	9. Ἰθάκη	1911	1910	2nd sing.	
	10. Ὅσο Μπορεῖς	1908	1898	2nd sing.	
	11. Τρῶες	1905	1900	1st plural	
HISTORICAL	12. Ὁ Βασιλεὺς Δημήτριος	1906	1900		288 B.C.
	13. Ἡ Δόξα τῶν Πτολεμαίων	1911	1896	1st sing.	323-221 B.C.
	14. Ἡ Συναδία τοῦ Διονύσου	1907	1903		before 211 B.C. (fall of Syracuse)
	15. Ἡ Μάχη τῆς Μαγνησίας	1916*	1913		197 B.C.
	16. Ἡ Δυσσρέσκεια τοῦ Σελευκίδου	1916*	1910		164 B.C.
	17. Ὁροφέρνης	1916*	1904		after 157 B.C.
	18. Ἀλεξανδρινοὶ Βασιλεῖς	1912	1912		34 B.C.
	19. Φιλέλλην	1912	1906	2nd sing.	Hellenistic/Roman
	20. Τὰ Βήματα	1909	1893		59-68 A.D.
	21. Ἡρώδης Ἀττικὸς	1912	1900		150-178 A.D.
	22. Ψανεύς Γλύπτης	1911	1903	1st sing.	after 30 B.C. (death of Caesarion)
	23. Λυσίου Γραμματικὸς Τάφος	1914	1911	1st plural	Hellenistic/Roman
	24. Εὐρίωνος Τάφος	1914	1912		Hellenistic/Roman
	25. Οὗτος Ἐκεῖνος	1909	1898		after c.180 A.D. (death of Lucian)
	26. Τὰ Ἐπικίνδυνα	1911	?		340-350 A.D.
	27. Μανουὴλ Κομνηνὸς	1916*	1905		1180 A.D.
SENSUAL	28. Στὴν Ἐκκλησία	1912	1892	1st sing.	4th century A.D. or later
	29. Πολὺ Σπανίως	1913	1911		
	30. Τοῦ Μαγαζιοῦ	1913	1912		
	31. Ζωγραφισμένα	1915	1914	1st sing.	
	32. Θάλασσα τοῦ Πρωῖοῦ	1915	?	1st sing.	
	33. Ἰωνικόν	1911	1896?	2nd sing.	
	34. Στοῦ Καφενίου τὴν Εἴσοδο	1915	?	1st sing.	
	35. Μιὰ Νύχτα	1915	1907	1st sing.	
	36. Ἐπέστρεψε	1912	1904	2nd sing.	
	37. Μακρὰ	1914	1914	1st sing.	
	38. Ὁμνίει	1915	1905		
	39. Ἐπὶ γῆ	1913	1905	1st sing.	
	40. Πολυέλατος	1914	1895		

* These poems were probably first printed in January 1916, but were regarded by Cavafy as poems of 1915.

TABLE 4
POEMS 1916-1918

	1	2	3	4	5
	Ref. No. and title	Date first issued	Date first written	Style where not third person	Date of historical subject matter
PHIL.	1. Ἀπ' τὴν Ἑνιά—	1918	1917	1st sing.	
	2. Νόησις	1918	1915	1st sing.	
HISTORICAL	3. Ἐνώπιον τοῦ Ἀγάλματος τοῦ Ἐνδιμάνου	1916	1895	1st sing.	Hellenistic/Roman
	4. Πρέσβεις ἀπ' τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρεια	1918	1915		157 B.C.
	5. Ἀριστόβουλος	1918	1916		35 B.C.
	6. Καίσαρ Ἰων	1918	1914	1st & 2nd sing.	30 B.C.
	7. Ἡ Διορία τοῦ Νέρωνος	1918	1915		67 A.D.
	8. Εἰς τὸ Ἐπίκειον	1918	1917		?
	9. Ἐνας Θεὸς τῶν	1917	1899		?
	10. Ἀδὴν Τάφος	1918	1916	2nd sing.	?
	11. Ἰασὶ Τάφος	1917	1917	1st sing.	?
	12. Ἐν Πόλει τῆς Ὀσσηνῆς	1917	1916	1st plural	137 B.C. - 216 A.D.
	13. Ἰγνατίου Τάφος	1917	1916	1st sing.	A.D.
	14. Ἐν τῷ Μηνί Ἀθῶν	1917	1917	1st sing.	A.D.
	15. Πὰ τὸν Ἀμμώνη, ποὺ πέθανε 29 ἔτῶν, στὰ 610	1917	1915	2nd sing.	610 A.D.
	16. Ἀμμιανὸς Μονῆ, Ἀλεξανδρεὺς, 628-655 M.X.	1918	?	1st sing.	655 A.D.
SENSUAL	17. Ὅταν Διηγείρονται	1916	1913	2nd sing.	
	18. Ἡδονή	1917	1913	1st sing.	
	19. Ἐστὶ πολὺ ἀτένισμα —	1917	1911	1st sing.	
	20. Ἐν τῇ Ὁδῷ	1916	1913		
	21. Ἡ Προθήκη τοῦ Καπνοπωλεῖου	1917	1907		
	22. Πέρασμα	1917	1914		
	23. Ἐν Ἑσπέρᾳ	1917	1916	1st sing.	
	24. Γκρίζα	1917	1917	1st sing.	
	25. Κάτω ἀπ' τὸ Σπίτι	1919*	1917	1st sing.	
	26. Τὸ Διπλὸν Τραπέζι	1919*	1918	1st sing.	
	27. Θυμῆσου, Σῶμα . . .	1918	1916	2nd sing.	
	28. Μέρεις τοῦ 1903	1917	1909	1st sing.	

* These poems were probably first printed in January 1919, but were regarded by Cavafy as poems of 1918.

Images of towns in Frankish Morea: the evidence of the 'Chronicles' of the Morea and of the Tocco¹

ANNETTA ILIEVA

In the summer of 1205 Raimbault of Vacqueyras, the troubadour who had shared Boniface of Monferrat's exploits in central Greece, exclaimed enthusiastically in Salonica:

'Never did Alexander or Charlemagne or King Louis had such a glorious expedition, nor could the valiant lord Aimeri or Roland with his warriors win by might, in such noble fashion, such a powerful empire as we have won, whereby our faith is in ascendant; for we have created emperors and dukes and kings, and have manned strongholds near the Turks and Arabs, and opened up the roads and ports from Brindisi to St. George's Straits'.²

This exalted statement clearly speaks of the notion of frontiership and expansion that, among other imperatives, governed the behaviour of the Franks who had gloriously conquered Constantinople and established an empire of their own on the ruins of Byzantium.³ It turned out that a new frontier was in store for them: the conquest

1. This is the expanded version of a paper presented at the Symposium 'Towns and Cities in Byzantium Peloponnesus' (Monemvasia, 24-26 July 1992). I am grateful to Dr. H. Kalligas for the financial support that facilitated my participation. For advice and assistance throughout my greatest debt is to A. Bryer. J.M. Wagstaff, E. Jeffreys, J. Pryor, and P. Lock all read an earlier draft and their comments and provoking questions helped to elucidate some thorny issues and feeble arguments. G. Smith of The Birmingham University Computing Service spent many hours in solving a technical problem and P. Baird very kindly made remarks resulting in the improvement of my English. The maps were drawn by T. Tomov. Finally, I should thank J. Haldon and the Editorial Board of *BMGS* for having accepted this publication for *BMGS*.

2. *The Poems of the Troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras*, ed. and trans. J. Linskill (The Hague 1964) 244. The italics are mine.

3. On the internal and external frontiers that the west experienced during the Middle Ages see R.I. Burns, 'The significance of the frontier in the Middle Ages', in R. Bartlett and A. MacKay (eds.), *Medieval Frontier Societies* (Oxford 1989) 313.

of the Peloponnese dragged on for some fifty years, only to be challenged very soon by a Byzantine return.

It is also important that Raimbault, who came from Provence, does not mention conquered towns as foreposts or symbols of the recent crusading achievement in the East. But scholars have assumed that subsequent Frankish colonisation in Greece had, in fact, an urban character.⁴ Besides, a closer look into Villehardouin's chronicle has revealed how Villehardouin's interplay between *ville* and *cit  * demonstrates the significance urban centres, as 'the true masters of space', had for the participants in the Fourth Crusade.⁵

Indeed, the urban theme, a fundamental theme in the Bible, is indicative of the twelfth-century literature in vernacular French. J. Le Goff has studied some of its works to investigate the nature of this phenomenon. *Le Charroi de N  mes*, a *chanson de geste* of 1135-65, presents a town that fascinates the knights.⁶ In *La Prise d'Orange*, a late twelfth-century *chanson*, 'the fascination becomes a veritable obsession'.⁷ However, in his last romance, *Perceval*, Chr  tien de Troyes reversed the city's positive image: here 'the city is hell'.⁸ Thus, by the end of the century, while the marvellous-town

4. D. Jacoby, 'Les   tats latins en Romanie: ph  nom  nes sociaux et   conomiques (1204-1330 environ)', XVe Congr  s International d'  tudes byzantines, Rapports et co-rapports, I.3: La symbiose dans les   tats latins form  s sur les territoires byzantins: ph  nom  nes sociaux,   conomiques, religieux et culturels (Athens 1976) 18.

5. J. Dufournet, *Les   crivains de la IVe croisade: Villehardouin et Clari*, 2 vols., I (Paris 1973) 70-2 (Dufournet's attention here is focused on the capture of Zara). Cf. P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, English trans. M. Jones (Oxford 1992) 101.

6. J. Le Goff, 'Guerriers et bourgeois conqu  rants: l'image de la ville dans la litt  rature fran  aise du XIIe si  cle', in *idem*, *L'imaginaire m  di  val* (Paris 1985) 213. Thus, N  mes is a city 'forte et puissante', 'bone', 'bien pourvue', 'fort garnie/vaillant', 'belle' (*ibidem* 209, 211, 213, 218 n. 1); Orange is 'une admirable cit  /ville', 'fameuse et riche', 'opulente' (*ibidem* 217, 219); Narbonne is 'grande' and 'puissante' (*ibidem* 219).

7. *ibidem* 220-1, English trans. A. Goldhammer, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago and London 1988) 160 (hereafter its corresponding pages will be given in square brackets). The reader is flooded with epithets: the town is 'bone', 'riche', 'magnifique', 'admirable', 'fort', 'vaillant', 'grant', 'garnie', 'opulent', 'bele'. For a sample of Villehardouin's repertory of adjectives and adverbs in similar contexts see P.M. Schon, *Studien zum Stil der fr  hen franz  sischen Prosa (Robert de Clari, Geoffroy de Villehardouin, Henri de Valenciennes)* (Frankfurt 1960) 218 (= *Analecta Romanica. Beihefte zu den romanischen Forschungen*, Heft 8).

8. Le Goff, 'Guerriers et bourgeois' 229-30 [166-7].

theme already precursed the urban mythology of the next two hundred years, the focus of urban imagination still fluctuated between 'the vision of the city of paradise and the city of hell, between Jerusalem and Babylon'.⁹ And then came the shock of Constantinople; fiction met reality.

The Peloponnese was not Constantinople, however. The scarcity of sources has nourished again and again controversial debates on Byzantine provincial cities, especially in the Dark Ages.¹⁰ It was then that by the use of *kastron* the Byzantines came to express an understanding of the town mainly as a fortified, safe shelter.¹¹ Later, at the close of the twelfth-century which witnessed the end of the economic recovery in Greece, the hitherto open, lower or outer town may have also been fortified, as at Corinth and Patras.¹² The fortress — which usually was the residence of the town governor and the dwelling place of local achons — topped the upper town. But in general, what little evidence we have suggests that the late Byzantine town 'tended to be physically unstructured' although it may have developed the 'socio-environmental units' inherited by the Turks as mahalles.¹³

The Peloponnese could not compete with the capital in the sphere of literary activity either. Perhaps we shall never learn how the locals viewed the urban settlements in the peninsula during the ups and downs

9. *Ibidem* 241 [175-6].

10. Some years ago John Teal even assumed that 'Byzantine urban history may never achieve the maturity of which its West European counterpart may boast'. — 'Byzantine urbanism in the military hand-books', in H.A. Miskimin, D. Herlihy and A.L. Udovitch (eds.), *The Medieval City* (New Haven and London 1977) 201. It is beyond the scope and purpose of this study to discuss these issues.

11. G.L. Kurbarov and G.E. Lebedeva, 'City and state in Byzantium in the age of transition from Antiquity to Feudalism', in *Stanovlenie i razvitie ranneklassovykh obščestv: gorod i gosudarsvo* (St. Petersburg 1986) 151 (in Russian); C. Foss, 'Kastron', in A. Kazhdan (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols., II (Oxford 1991) 1112 (hereafter *ODB*); *idem*, 'Fortifications', *ibidem* 798.

12. A. Ilieva, *Frankish Morea (1205-1262): Socio-cultural Interaction between the Franks and the Local Population* (Athens 1991) 84. For the recovery see C. Foss and A. Kazhdan, 'Cities', in *ODB*, I 466.

13. A. Bryer, 'The structure of the late Byzantine town: *dioikismos* and the *mesoi*', in *idem*, *Peoples and Settlements in Anatolia and the Caucasus, 800-1900* (London: Var repr. 1988), no. X 263-4.

of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth-century. The first 'bank' of evidence that stimulates an investigation of the imaginary is a product of a later age of foreign domination and it is noteworthy that what we have to deal with is history writing in the vernacular.

I. The texts

The manuscript tradition of the Greek 'Chronicle of the Morea' which is written in the fifteenth-syllable 'political' metre of Greek popular verse and covers the period of 1095 to 1292, when it breaks off abruptly, is represented by five manuscripts.¹⁴ The earliest and the most anti-Greek manuscript — manuscript *H* of the 1380s — has an imperfect beginning. Manuscript *T* derives from *H* and is the possible start for the sixteenth-century prose translation into Italian represented by a single manuscript with an imperfect beginning referring to ca. 1097 and abrupt ending with the events of 1292.¹⁵ The other three manuscripts having the Greek text constitute a distinct group. The most important of them is manuscript *P*, dated between 1515-1530. *H* and *P* differ in their proper-name forms, in grammatical categories, in word order, and in their mood. *P* softens or abandons *H*'s anti-Greek passages and Frankish terms: its compiler was an Orthodox Greek who possibly lived in Italy in the fifteenth- or the beginning of the sixteenth-century.

The French 'Chronicle of the Morea' in prose is represented by a single manuscript of the early fifteenth-century: it was copied at the court of the Duke of Burgundy by a Picardian or Wallonian scribe.¹⁶ The text commences at about the same point as in *P*, but

14. On what follows see in more detail *The Chronicle of Morea*, ed. J. Schmitt (London 1904) xv-xviii. Schmitt edited the two most important Greek manuscripts, *H* and *P*, on facing pages and supplied readings from the Turin manuscript, or *T*. Hereafter his edition will be referred to as *Chronikon*. The relevant pages of *H*'s translation into English (*Crusaders as Conquerors: The Chronicle of Morea*, trans. H.E. Lurier [New York and London, 1964]) will appear in square brackets.

15. 'Versione italiana inedita della cronaca di Morea', in *Chroniques gréco-romanes*, ed. C. Hopf (Berlin 1873), no. XXIV 414-68 (hereafter *Cronaca*).

16. On what follows see J. Longnon (ed.), *Livre de la conquête de la principauté de l'Amorée: Chronique de Morée (1204-1305)* (Paris 1911) lxxxv-lxxxvii (hereafter *Livre*) and the corrections by D. Jacoby, 'Quelques considérations sur les versions de la «Chronique de Morée»', *Journal des Savants* (1968) 134f.

the narrative breaks off at the events of 1305.¹⁷ It is preceded by what P. Schreiner recently called a 'short chronicle' which starts with the Christian capture of Jerusalem in 1099 and mentions events as late as 1333.¹⁸ In the prologue the compiler informs us that he will tell his tale not as he had found it written but as briefly as he could (para 1). In general, *Livre*'s text is much shorter and often clearer than that of *H* but nonetheless they are closely related to each other.

The Aragonese (or Castilian?) 'Chronicle of the Morea' in prose has come down to us in a single manuscript dated 23/24 October 1393. It was compiled for the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, Juan Fernández de Heredia, who resided at Avignon from 1382 until his death in 1396.¹⁹ The narrative begins with events of ca. 1200 and reaches 1376/7.

Few sources of medieval Greek history have inspired more controversies than the 'Chronicle of the Morea'. Through the years debate has been focused on the relationship between the French/Greek versions and a supposed *Uhrtext*, on the social status of their compilers and the nature of their audiences. The scope of this study only allows a brief historiographical note on recent research. Some twenty-five years ago D. Jacoby developed the hypothesis that the Greek version is a translation of *Livre* which in turn derives from a subsequently lost original French text composed between 1292 and 1320.²⁰ Ca. 1320-24, he claims, this original version was greatly abridged and then a 'table of contents', represented by the chronological table in *Livre*'s Ms, was extracted to precede the abrégé. Ca. 1341-6 the abbreviated text was expanded with some interpolations.²¹ The

17. D.M. Nicol, 'The end of the Livre de la Conquête: a chronological note', *BF* 12 (1987) 211-20.

18. *Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, 3 pts., II (Vienna 1977) 628.

19. *Libro de los fechos et conquistas del principado de la Morea* . . . , ed. A. Morel-Fatio (Geneva 1885) xiii, 160 (hereafter *Libro*). A new edition is now in press. For Heredia see A. Luttrell, 'Greek histories translated and compiled for Juan Fernández de Heredia, master of Rhodes, 1377-1396', *Speculum* 35 (1960) 401-7. For the dating see Jacoby, 'Quelques considérations' 160 n. 115, 161-2, 174.

20. See no. 16 above.

21. Jacoby, 'Quelques considérations', 134-50, 181-9; *idem*, 'La littérature française dans les États latins de la Méditerranée orientale', in *Essor et fortune de la chanson de geste dans l'Europe et l'Orient latin* (Modena 1984) 638, 643-4.

Greek version was translated from this second revision and should be dated to 1341/6-1377/88. The compiler of *H*'s text was a Greek archon — a convert to Catholicism assimilated to the 'class' of the French knights in the Principality and writing for a Greek Moreot public of the same class. It is possible that he belonged to the entourage of Erard III Le Maure, the lord of Arkadia in Messenia who died shortly after 5 July 1388.²²

As for *Libro*, Jacoby postulates three stages in its history. The first, of 1378-81, he locates in the Morea, and again in the entourage of Erard III.²³ The language of this first redaction was French, but its compiler used *Chronikon* extensively and abbreviated what he could from a complete copy of the French version of 1320/4 at his disposal.²⁴ The second stage concerned the transfer of the Moreot text to Avignon and its subsequent translation into Aragonese (or Castilian).²⁵ The third stage, shortly before 23/24 October 1393, involved incorporation of additional sources and a revision of which *Libro* was the final result.²⁶

Jacoby's conclusions were challenged by M. Jeffreys who believes that it was *Livre* which was translated from *H*'s Greek version.²⁷ Over the years, he steadily stayed behind the idea that this 'original' Greek poem, produced about 1320 'under the patronage of the Greek nobles', is of highly formulaic character and is closely connected with a traditional oral type of composition.²⁸ But as R. Beaton has observed, many of the repetitions noted by the Jeffreys 'contain learned linguistic elements [and] were traditional within a written

22. D. Jacoby, 'Jean Laskaris Kalopheros, Chypre et la Morée', *REB* 26 (1968) 199-200, 218-9; *idem*, 'Quelques considérations' 140, 187.

23. *Ibidem* 162 and nn. 126-7, 163, 169, 177-8.

24. *Ibidem* 177. This statement should be complemented by what Jacoby says earlier on p. 148: the redaction of the French version of 1341/6 or a copy of it was used by the author of the Moreot text compiled between 1377 and 1381.

25. *Ibidem* 163, 178 n. 212.

26. *Ibidem* 179-80.

27. 'The Chronicle of Morea: priority of the Greek version' *BZ* 68/2 (1975) 304-50.

28. See recently 'Η γλώσσα του Χρονικού του Μορέως — Γλώσσα μιας προφορικής παράδοσης', in *Neograeca Medii Aevi: Text und Ausgabe* (Cologne 1986) 149, 152-4, 157; M. and E. Jeffreys, 'The Oral background of Byzantine popular poetry', *Oral Tradition* 1/3 (1986) 518.

rather than an oral medium'.²⁹

The contrasting hypotheses just summarised are hard to reconcile. My own research has shown that Jacoby's view should be revised. The nature and dating of the 'table of contents' are to be reconsidered in the light of the Byzantine 'short-chronicle' tradition, while a common Old French prototype for *Livre* and *Chronikon* has again re-emerged from oblivion.³⁰ In fact, this study provides some arguments in favour of such a stand. The evidence of the 'Tocco chronicle' is used here to illustrate certain peculiarities of the Moreot texts.

This 'chronicle', praising the brothers Leonardo II (+ 1418/1419) and Carlo I Tocco — *despotes* of Ioannina since 1411 and of Epiros since 1415 — has not been seriously investigated since G. Schirò edited it in 1975.³¹ Its earliest manuscript, *Vaticanus gr. 1831*, was completed by June 1429 and shows some acquaintance with *Chronikon* as in *H*.³² Schirò believed that it is an autograph produced in Ioannina.³³ His argumentation was challenged, on different grounds, by J. Koder, A. Kazhdan, and — in a recent conversation — by E. Zachariadou.³⁴

29. *The Medieval Greek Romance* (Cambridge 1989) 177; *idem*, 'Orality and the reception of late Byzantine vernacular literature', *BMGS* 14 (1990) 177.

30. The gist of the argument has been presented in a paper at the First International Medieval Congress in Leeds (4-7 July 1994). It is to be found in more detail in my monograph *The Chronicles of the Morea, of Leontios Machairas and of the Tocco. A Comparative Study*. Unfortunately, its publication might have to be postponed awaiting the new edition of the Aragonese version by A. Luttrell.

31. *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia di Anonimo: Prolegomeni, testo critico e traduzione* (Rome 1975) (hereafter *Chron. Tocco* for the text and 'Prolegomeni' for Schirò's introduction).

32. The other manuscript, *Vaticanus gr. 2214* (first half of the sixteenth century) is an apograph by the scribe Nicholas Sophianos. — Schirò, 'Prolegomeni' 142, 156-61. On the relation between *Vat. gr. 1831* and *H* see J. Koder, 'Die Chronik der Tocco: Zum Metrum und zum Verhältniss zur Chronik von Morea', *JÖB* 32/3 (1982) 383-92.

33. 'Prolegomeni' 145-9.

34. For Zachariadou's earlier view see 'Οἱ χίλιοι στίχοι στὴν ἀρχὴ τοῦ Χρονικοῦ τῶν Τόκκο', *Ἑπειρωτικὰ χρονικά* 25 (1938) 159 and n. 4. For Koder's view see op. cit. 383. Kazhdan also claims that the 'chronicle' was created 'either in Italophone circles or in a mixed Grego-Italian milieu'. — 'Some notes on the "Chronicle of the Tocco"', in *Bisanzio e l'Italia. Raccolta di studi in memoria di Agostino Pertusi* (Milano 1982) 170. Cf. A. Ilieva, 'The image of the Morea (Frankish and Byzantine) in the mentality of a Gianniot: the author of the Tocco Chronicle', in *Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου γιὰ τὸ Λεσποτάτου της Ἑπείρου* ('Αρτα, 27-31 Μαΐου 1990) (Αρτα 1992) 309-12. The Gianniot provenance of the 'chronicle' has been challenged by G. Papatrechas, 'Χρονικὸ τῶν Τόκκο: Μία ἐκδοχὴ γιὰ τὸν τόπο καταγωγῆς τοῦ συγγραφέα-στιχουργοῦ', *Ιστοριογεωγραφικά* 3 (1989-1990) 289-292.

II. Urban and non-urban settlements as in the 'Chronicles'

It has been remarked that Villehardouin consistently uses *cité* in opposition to *chastel* and *terre*.³⁵ Unfortunately, there are no general studies of the urban 'terminology' offered by the literature in Greek vernacular.³⁶ It may then be of some importance to consider briefly what our 'chronicles' have to say about the towns outside the Peloponnese.

In the Greek texts Constantinople bears the palm and is most often designated as 'the *Polis*'. Then, in descending order, follow the labels 'Constantine's *polis*',³⁷ 'the *chora* of the *Polis*',³⁸ 'Konstantinoupolis',³⁹ 'the *polis* of Constantine',⁴⁰ 'the *chora*'.⁴¹ Once it even seems to have been named «ἡ Βυζαντία». ⁴² It is worth mentioning that in most of the cases singled out above the French version has

35. Dufournet, *Les écrivains de la IV^e croisade* 69 (as in n. 5 above) where he also points out that in twelfth-century Old French literature in prose *ville* is more frequently used than *cité* although their usage is indiscriminate in verse. Cf. Le Goff, 'Guerriers et bourgeois' 210 (as in n. 6 above) for the loose nomenclature of 'château, cité, bourg ou ville, donjon ou place forte' of *Le Charroi de Nîmes*.

36. See the brief entry under *polis* in the *ODB* (III 1692) where A. Kazhdan, referring to the 'Chronicle of the Tocco' (on Ioannina), assumes that 'in the 15th C. in addition to *polis* many terms were used for town, esp. *chora* and *kastro* . . . , and the distinction between them was vague'. E. Kriaras (*Λεξικό της μεσαιωνικής ελληνικής δημόδους γραμματείας*, 1100-1669 [Thessalonike 1969—] *sub kastro(n)*) notes that *kastro(n)* still meant a fortress (*phrourio*: the reference is to *H*'s v. 2868) and was also used in the sense of a fortified town. The volumes of his *Dictionary* containing entries on *polis* and *chora* are yet to come.

37. «ἡ Κωνσταντίνου πόλις». This expression is of a formulaic nature according to M. Jeffreys, 'Formulas in the Chronicle of Morea', *DOP* 20 (1973) 179. Concerning the fall of Constantinople it is used on equal grounds with 'the *Polis*', i.e. *Chronikon* vv. 838H. Cf. *Chron. Tocco* vv. 2119, 2122, 3415, 3506, 3516, 3529.

38. *Chronikon* vv. 532 (*Livre* para 37), 583, 629H-30 (*Livre* para 47), 855H (*Livre* para 56), 1027H. Cf. *Cronaca* 420. For its translation as 'the city of Constantinople' see Schmitt's 'Index of notable Greek words' 622 and Lurier (both as in n. 14 above) 113 n. 14.

39. *Chronikon* v. 8701.

40. «ἡ πόλις Κωνσταντίνου»: *Chronikon* v. 447H. Here *P* has «ἡ πόλις τοῦ βασιλέως, τοῦ μέγα Κωνσταντίνου».

41. *Chronikon* v. 848H. The whole passage runs: 'Our Franks returned to the City [«εἰς τὴν Πόλιν»], and when they arrived at the harbour, they surrounded the town [«τὴν πόλιν»] by land and by sea' (vv. 846H-8 [91]). Cf. *Livre* para 56.

42. *Chronikon*, vv. 8761-2 [314]. Here *Livre* (para 605) has 'en Constantinople'.

'la cité de Co(n)stantinoble'.⁴³ However, the passages corresponding to those in which *Chronikon* makes use of *chora* deserve special attention. In all three of them the French compiler abandons 'la ville' for 'la cité' or vice versa and in this way manages to achieve an opposition between a concrete and debasing notion and a general and imposing image.⁴⁴

Other towns worthy of the titles *polis*/'città'/'cité'/'ciudad' are Rome,⁴⁵ Antioch,⁴⁶ Paris,⁴⁷ Venice,⁴⁸ Castagnola delle Lanze in Piedmont,⁴⁹ Zara,⁵⁰ Thessalonike,⁵¹ Adrianople,⁵² Ioannina.⁵³ Jerusalem is a strange omission here.⁵⁴

The following expressions are also most interesting: «τὰ κάστρη καὶ τῆς χώρης»/'castelli e terre'/'villes et chastiaux'/'ciudades (tierras) he(y) castiellos'.⁵⁵ They occur in passages referring to places both outside and inside the Peloponnese. A full list would

43. See for example *Livre* paras 55, 77, 84 and *Chronikon* vv. 840-1H, 1203-6, 1292.

44. For the concordance see nn. 38 and 41 above. Most eloquent is para 47: The Greeks killed all French whom they found in the town ('ville') of Constantinople. But as it was pleasing to God no gentilez homme was then in the city (cité), only poor men of their retinue and men of trade. Cf. Dufournet, *Les écrivains de la IVe croisade* 71-2.

45. *Chronikon* v. 781H.

46. *Ibidem* v. 86P; *Livre* para 4.

47. *Ibidem* para 11.

48. *Ibidem* paras 14-6; *Chronikon* v. 343H (but v. 349 puts *chora* in the doge's speech).

49. *Livre* para 12: 'cité de Lans'. Here *Chronikon* has «Λάτσα (H)/Λάντσα (P) ... χώρα μεγάλη» (v. 226). In fact, this was 'a castle in the territory of Asti'. — D.E. Queller, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople, 1201-1204* (Leicester 1978) 27.

50. *Chronikon* v. 416; *Livre* paras 22-3. However, see v. 438 (*chora*) and para 24 ('ville'). The interplay between *cité* and *ville* here parallels what Dufournet (as in n. 44 above) has observed on the capture of Zara as presented by Villehardouin.

51. *Chronikon*, v. 1010; *Livre* para 69; *Libro* para 63.

52. *Cronaca* 421; *Livre* para 71. *Chronikon* (vv. 1084, 1165, 1170) has *chora* and *Livre* (paras 72, 79) — 'ville'. The motives behind the switch are the same as in the case of Zara.

53. *Chron.* *Tocco* vv. 2176, 3315. The 'Chronicle of the Morea' in turn, speaks of Ioannina as a *kastro*: vv. 8795H, 9007P.

54. *Chronikon* vv. 96-7P: the crusaders besieged the *chora* and 'entered it' [70].

55. It should be mentioned that M. Jeffreys (as in n. 37 above) has not included their Greek variant in his list of formulae. The phrasing is not peculiar to the 'Chronicle of the Morea' alone. Cf. for example the *Achilleis* v. 73N (p. 44 of Hesselung's edition) and the *History of Belisarius* vv. 158N, 234 Georghillas, 161N² (pp. 152-3 of Bakker's and Van Gemert's edition).

occupy too much space, but some cases are worth mentioning in view of similar phrasing in both Villehardouin and *Le Charroi de Nîmes*.⁵⁶ Alexios I Komnenos is said to have received *ta kastre kai tes chores* in Asia Minor that the crusaders had regained from the Seljuks.⁵⁷ A relevant Byzantine expression is to be found in Anna Komnena's passage describing Godfrey of Bouillon's oath to her father: 'namely, that whatever cities and lands or fortresses he should capture, which formerly were reckoned under the empire of the Greeks, he would hand over to the general, sent by the emperor for this very purpose'.⁵⁸ Having taken Antioch the crusaders were plundering and capturing *ta kastre kai tes chores* in Syria.⁵⁹ The Franks subdued Constantinople, crowned an emperor, took *ta kastre*, and distributed *tes chores* of all Romania.⁶⁰ After the victory at Adrianople Kaloyan devastated 'muchos tierras & castiellos'.⁶¹ 'Sir Robert, full brother of the Emperor Baldwin . . . held suzerainty over *chores kai kastre* in Nymphos'.⁶² Reportedly, Michael VIII

56. The Marshal of Romania consistently refers to 'the cities and the castles' disputed between the Franks, on the one hand, and the Greeks or the forces of Kaloyan, on the other: paras 391, 412, 418-9, 422 as in E. Faral's edition, vol. 2 (Paris 1939). 'Domaines, châteaux, terres, donjons, forteresses' are strong tempts to knights — 'pauvres bacheliers' (Le Goff, 'Guerriers et bourgeois' 210). See also the so-called *Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier* [of the 1230s], ed. L. de Mas Latrie (Paris 1871) 379 ('cil des castiaus et des cités'), 466 ('castiaus et viles'); *La continuation de Guillaume de Tyr (1184-1197)* [of the third quarter of the 13th c.], ed. M.R. Morgan (Paris 1982) 153 ('les citez et les chastiaus').

57. *Chronikon* v. 62; *Cronaca* 414.

58. X, IX 11 (226.11-7 of Leib's edn., vol. 2 [Paris 1967]), Engl. trans. in G. Buckler, *Anna Komnena: A Study* (Oxford and London 1929) 462. The French translation (p. 226) of «πόλεις καὶ χώρας ἢ προὔρια» is 'les villes, contrées ou forteresses'. Cf. J.H. Pryor, 'The oaths of the leaders of the First Crusade to Emperor Alexius I Komnenos: fealty, homage — *pistis, douleia*', *Parergon* 2 (1984) 122 ('all towns, districts, and fortresses'); J. Shepard, 'When Greek meets Greek: Alexius Komnenos and Bohemond in 1097-98', *BMGS* 12 (1988) 229 ('towns, territories or fortresses').

59. *Chronikon* vv. 88-9; *Cronaca* 414.

60. *Chronikon* vv. 1036-7. Cf. *Libro* paras 37 (referring to 'las ciudades & castiellos' of Byzantium with regard to June 1203), 52 (here the talk is about the Partition Treaty: the other 'barons and knights' were given 'tierras & castiellos').

61. *Ibidem* para 62.

62. *Chronikon* v. 1174H [101]. The passage should be referred to Henry of Hainault and Nymphaion near Smyrna. Cf. *Livre* para 78.

Palaiologos gave *choras* to some archons.⁶³ William of Champlitte 'would go to Romania to conquer some *kastre kai choras* to have as his estates'.⁶⁴

It is obvious, as P. Topping long ago pointed out, that Lurier's consistent rendering of *chores* as 'towns' in these and other passages is questionable.⁶⁵ In such cases within the Tocco 'chronicle' Schirò has the Italian 'fortezze e paesi'.⁶⁶

The issue is related to another problem of meaning — the connotation of *chora* as the outer or lower town. Here we come to the evidence concerning settlements within the Peloponnese.

Only once, as far as I can discover, is the term *polis* used in connection with an urban settlement in the peninsula: 'the large town [chora] of the city [polis] of Argos' is said to have lain 'in a plain like an opened tent'.⁶⁷ This usage seems indeed exceptional: the only *poleis* in the Peloponnesian 'short chronicles' are Nauplion and Monemvasia.⁶⁸ But Argos is labelled as 'cité'/'ciudad' in *Livre* and

63. *Chronikon* v. 1241. Cf. *Cronaca* 421: he gave 'castelli a questo ■ a quello'.

64. *Chronikon* v. 1383H. Here *P* has «κάστρον ἢ τόπος».

65. Topping suggests that the 'plural . . . must rather be rendered "(country) districts" or "lands"': in *Speculum* XL/4 (1965) 741 (a review of Lurier's translation). As for the singular, Lurier (104 n. 88, 113 n. 14) renders *chora* both as 'town' and 'city' and occasionally as 'quarter' (e.g. in v. 1280 referring to Galata). His 'Sir Nicolas [Nicholas II of Saint-Omer] also built in the town of Maniatochori a castelet' [p. 298] for «. . . ἐποίησεν . . . στή χώραν τοῦ Μανιατοχωρίου, ἕναν μικρὸν καστέλλιν» [*Chronikon* vv. 8093-4] seems impossible. Cf. *Livre* para 554 ('first fermer la maison de Maniatecor quant il estoit sires'); *Chronikon* vv. 8069-70; A. Bon, *La Morée franque: Recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la principauté d'Achaïe* (1205-1430), 2 vols., I (Paris 1969) 416, 435 (hereafter Bon, *La Morée*).

66. *Chron. Tocco* pp. 481, 483, 485 for vv. 3510, 3518, 3574. For him «τὰ χωρία» are again 'paesi' (pp. 485, 493 for vv. 3575, 3668), or, 'villaggi' (p. 493 for v. 3682). He also renders «ἡ χώρα τῆς Ἀνδρουσας» by 'il paese di Andrusa' (p. 483 for v. 3539).

67. *Chronikon* vv. 1524-6 [113]. Lurier (n. 4 *ad loc.*) justifies his translation as 'distinguishing town from castle'. Here I would rather translate *chora* as 'lower town'. Cf. Schmitt (as in n. 38 above): 'the town of Argos'.

68. *Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, no. 32/10, I (Vienna 1975) 230 (a 'chronicle of Argos and Nauplion' compiled after the autumn of 1464, no. 41/5: 319-20 (a chronicle consisting of dated excerpts from ■ Monemvasiot source or other texts referring to Monemvasia; it may have been compiled by the Monemvasiot John Likinios and its only manuscript was copied after 1640). The second piece of evidence concerns the surrender of Nauplion and Monemvasia to the Turks (21-24 November 1540). Cf. *ibidem* ■ 580-1.

in the Aragonese text.⁶⁹

On the other hand, several urban settlements have stock labels. In the 'Chronicle of the Morea' Andravida and Clarentza appear always as *chores*/'ville'/'villes'/'tierras'.⁷⁰ Andravida was 'an open town', 'without walls and a fortress'.⁷¹ But Clarentza, the new metropolis created by the Franks, had a strong citadel defending the port below and an outer wall.⁷² The Aragonese version then understandably speaks of 'la tierra y castiello de Clarenca' (para 217). The 'Chronicle of the Tocco' even mentions 'the walls of the *chora* and their 'iron gate' topped by a 'tower'.⁷³

Patras, Corinth, Nikli, Veligosti and Lakedaimon are each most often labelled as *chora*/'terra' or 'città'/'cité'/'ciudad'.⁷⁴ What is more, describing the capture of the first two and of Argos the

When the same chronicle refers to the Venetian take over of Monemvasia [after 12 May 1462] the latter is labelled as *chora* (I 320). Cf. *ibidem* II 506. Nauplion, like Argos, is not frequently mentioned by the 'Chronicle of the Morea' but Monemvasia ranks second (*Chronikon*) and fifth (*Livre*) according to the data collected in the Indices and coming from a personal examination of the Greek text (see Figs. 1 and 2). References to the baronies/fiefs of the same name and their lords have not been taken into account. Of the repetitions only the meaningful ones have been included. Unfortunately, a computerised checking of the results was not possible at this stage of the study.

69. *Livre* paras 200 ('la cité et le chastel d'Argues'), 223, 870, 917 ('la cité d'Argues') but para 105: 'la ville de Corinte . . . et celle d'Argues'; *Libro* paras 93, 95, 212.

70. Both are mentioned quite often: Clarentza ranks first, third and fifth in my count (*Libro*, *Livre* and *Chronikon* resp.) while Andravida is first, second and fourth (*Chronikon*, *Libro* and *Livre*). Clarentza is the only *ville* appearing in the 'table of contents' (*Livre* p. 403).

71. *Chronikon* vv. 1428-9; *Livre* para 105. See also below.

72. Bon, *La Morée* 321, 322, 602-7. It is interesting to note that Clarentza was a striking exception to a general rule applied in the Holy Land where the crusaders did not construct any entirely new cities. There they might use an ancient site to build a castle in the 'shadow' of which 'civilian population settled' in the event, as was the case with Château Pèlerin. — J. Prawer, 'Crusader cities', in *The Medieval City* (as in n. 10 above) 180, 182.

73. *Chron. Tocco* vv. 560, 607f., 618-9, 629, 631-633. In fact, apart from the opposition between the *chora* and the *kastro* of Clarentza, in this episode concerning the Moreot expedition of Carlo I Tocco in 1407 the town as a whole appears both as a *chora* (v. 540, 556) and a *kastro* (vv. 653-4).

74. See Figs. 1-3. Regarding Nikli occasional confusion with Amyklai in Laconia should be taken into account. It is worth noting that Patras is the only *cité* in the 'table of contents' (*Livre* p. 403).

'Chronicle of the Morea' uses the opposition *chora* — *kastro*/'città — castello'/ 'cité — chastel'/'ciudad — castiello'.⁷⁵ Otherwise they are mentioned by name with no attributes to 'classify' them. Such an opposition is absent in *Chronikon*'s episodes describing how the Franks conquered Nikli and Veligosti.⁷⁶

A contrast is also evident between *kastro* and *mpourkos*/'borgo'/'bourg'/'bourgo' on the one hand, and *kastro* and (e)*mporio*(n), on the other.⁷⁷ For the Peloponnese we always find it in passages concerning surrender to an enemy force: the capture of Arkadia by the Franks in 1205-9?⁷⁸ the burning of the *emporion* of Veligosti by the Byzantine troops in 1263;⁷⁹ the take over of Araklovon/Bucelet in Skorta by Geoffrey of Briel the Younger in 1279;⁸⁰ the assault on the castle of Kalamata by the Slavs of Giannitza in 1292/4;⁸¹ the capture of the castle of St. George in Skorta by

75. *Chronikon* vv. 1411, 1415-7, 1421 and *Livre* para 91 (on Patras). Cf. 'short chronicle' no. 32/43, I 236 (as in n. 68 above). On the siege of Akrocorinth, Sgouros's tactics and the construction of Mont Escovée see *Chronikon* vv. 1459-62, 1470-6; *Cronaca* 423-4; *Livre* paras 95-6; *Libro* paras 92-6, 99, 101, 105-6. On the capture of Argos see *Cronaca* 424. Cf. 'short chronicles' no. 32/27, I 233 and no. 33/60, I 254 (that portion of the chronicle was edited after 1470). Schreiner (III 69) translates the 'chora of Argos' as 'Ort Argos'.

76. vv. 2024ff. This may be interpreted as implying that the outer towns of Nikli and Veligosti were not fortified. Both settlements may subsequently appear in attributive phrasing, e.g. the *kastro* of Nikli (*Chronikon* v. 4603) or the *chora* of Veligosti (*ibidem* v. 5467). In the allotment episode (vv. 1931-4) it is the *kastro* of Veligosti and Nikli that are of importance, not the *chores*.

77. On the etymology of *emporion* see Zakythinis, *op. cit.*, 168 n. 2. The term is polysemantic and 'might designate a commercial quarter of a town, a market situated outside the urban fortifications, or a settlement which was in itself a marketplace'. — A. Kazhdan, 'Emporion' in *ODB*, I: 694. On the relation *kastro*/name/*emporion* see M. Živojinović, 'Settlements with Marketplace Status', *ZRV* 24-5 (1986) 408. On the term *mpourkos* see Schmitt's Index (as in n. 38 above) 612: 'the surroundings of a castle'. Cf. Kriaras, *Λεξικό, sub mpourgos*. On the *burgus* in a medieval French context see A. Chédeville, 'De la cité à la ville, 1000-1150', in G. Duby (ed.), *Histoire de la France urbaine*, vol. 2 (Paris 1980) 59-61.

78. *Chronikon* vv. 1687H (here P has «εἰς τὸ ἔξω») and 1689: *mpourkos* — *kastro*.

79. *Ibidem* vv. 4665-6.

80. *kastro* — *mpourkos*: *Chronikon* vv. 8233-6H (v. 8236P has «ἐξὼ τοῦ κάστρου»), 8240-4H (v. 8244P has «ἐκὼς τοῦ κάστρου»); *Cronaca* 463; *Livre* para 575; *Libro* para 435. See also below.

81. *Livre* paras 696, 741 (the 'bourg' was 'down below the castle'). See also below. It is noteworthy that the princely castle of Kalamata is the most frequently mentioned settlement in *Livre* (it also appears once in the 'table of contents' — p. 400).

Andronikos Asan in 1320;⁸² the Frankish attack on the castle of Gardiki in Messenia in 1374.⁸³ Narrating about the Epirote expedition against Morea in 1407, the 'Tocco chronicle' specifically distinguishes the *mporio* within the *chora* of Clarentza (vv. 578-605) and opposes the *kastro* and the *mporio* in the unfortified *chora* of Vostitza during its sack by the Mistriots in 1422.⁸⁴ Once we also hear of a donjon and a 'bourg' — those of the castle of St. Helen in Skorta.⁸⁵

III. Functions

1. *Loci* emitting power

The 'Chronicle of the Morea' praises Andravida, the administrative centre of the Principality, as 'the most splendid town in the plain of Morea'.⁸⁶ Although Philip of Savoy had a hostel in Clarentza, he stayed 'more willingly' in Andravida — 'to the delight of the noblemen of the land and for the sake of the amusements and the things that he and his men had [there] in abundance, more than in Clarentza'.⁸⁷ But despite the attractions of Elis where several princely residences were situated, the court of the Prince often moved either to Corinth, to Lakedaimon-Mistra, or to Nikli and our texts are fully aware of this decentralisation. Corinth, we are told by the Greek compiler, was 'the capital which governed all of the Peloponnesos, which is included in Morea' (vv. 1445-9H [110]). The Aragonese version adds to this picture by informing us that William [II] of Villehardouin [1246-1274/8] 'had the castle of Corinth

82. *Libro* paras 648, 651: 'castiello' — 'burguo'. The castle appears thrice in the 'table of contents': *Livre* pp. 400, 404.

83. *Libro* paras 714-6: 'burguo' — 'castiello'.

84. vv. 3756, 3759, 3774, 3780, 3792, 3796, 3800. It was the *mporia* of both towns that bade for pillage. On the market as the central place in the twelfth-century town in the west see *Le Charroi de Nîmes* and Le Goff's comments — 'Guerriers et bourgeois' 213 (as in n. 6 above).

85. *Livre* paras 928-9. On more details see below.

86. *Chronikon* vv. 1426-7 [109]. Cf. *Livre* paras 92, 105 ('la meillor/maistre ville de la Morée').

87. *Ibidem* paras 858, 871.

very well repaired and had very beautiful palaces made in it'.⁸⁸

Lakedaimon in turn, is said to have been 'a large town with towers and good walls, all well mortared'.⁸⁹ There was a princely palace in it.⁹⁰ But after 1262 its situation changed for the worse:

'Most of the Romans of that town had gone with their families to the castle of Mistra. And when the prince found the town empty of the native castle troops, he was very sorry. . . He immediately assigned and gave their houses to certain others whom he put to live therein, who were Franks of the land. . . He supplied the town of Lakedaemonia; he placed troops in it and ordered that "they build it up and strengthen it in any way they needed"'.⁹¹

The French version, however, claims that 'the greater part of the Greeks had . . . gone over to Mistra because the emperor's men had taken them away. . . Then . . . [the prince] manned their houses and lands and possessions with Latins and Greeks' (para 387).

Nikli and Veligosti, too, appear as 'the chief . . . [towns] in all Morea'.⁹² Nikli had a princely palace as well.⁹³

2. Defence

The Greek version of the 'Chronicle of the Morea' tells that at the time of the conquest the Peloponnese had twelve *kastra*.⁹⁴ Their subsequent adaptation and eventual extension have been meticulously studied by A. Bon.⁹⁵ Indeed, repairing, additions or even demolition

88. *Libro* para 216. Cf. J. Longnon, *Les compagnons de Villehardouin: Recherches sur les croisés de la quatrième croisade* (Geneva 1978) 37, who links the episode to Geoffrey I of Villehardouin (1209-1226/31). The castle of Corinth, coupled with those of Monemvasia and Nauplion, is also reported to have had the best harbour for connections with Constantinople. — *Chronikon* vv. 2765-7; *Livre* para 189.

89. *Chronikon* vv. 2052-3 [1311]; *Cronaca* 430. Cf. *Livre* paras 329, 385.

90. *Libro* para 291.

91. *Chronikon* vv. 5606-5619P [234].

92. *Chronikon* vv. 1752-3H [121]. Here P has «μείζοντες» — bigger.

93. *Chronikon* vv. 4410-2H puts it in the *chora* while P specifies that it was in the *kastro*.

94. *Chronikon* vv. 1403-6; *Cronaca* 422. Cf. Ilieva, *Frankish Morea* 197-8. The *kastra* which put up resistance were more than twelve: Patras, Pontikokastro, Araklovon, Arkadia, Modon, Coroni, Kalamata, Lakedaimon, Nikli, Veligosti, Monemvasia, Argos, Nauplion and Akrocorinth.

95. See n. 65 above.

seemed necessary at times; it is interesting to see what changes have been noted by our texts. In the early 1260s the Franks had to encircle *Andravida* with a fosse to guard it against the Byzantine troops.⁹⁶ After the events of 1292-4 which showed the extent of the threat from the Taygetos Slavs the donjon walls of the 'great castle of Kalamata' were elevated to a greater height.⁹⁷

On the other side, when in 1296 the Greeks took back *Nikli* they were convinced that it was extremely difficult to defend — as it lay in the plain. Thus, they destroyed it and erected two castles — *Mouchli* and *Tsepiana* — 'up there on the mountain to control the entire plain [below]'.⁹⁸ Later, in June 1302, during the revolt in *Skorta* the Greeks burnt down the donjon and the 'bourg' of the castle of *St. Helen*: they saw that it stood 'in a weak place' and could not be retained 'against the power of the Latins'.⁹⁹ They also pulled down the walls of the castle of *Crievecueur* and set fire to everything. However, they did not take the castle of *Beaufort*: it had 'a nice tower, high and large, and [was] walled with good towers of lime and sandstone, and manned with good arbalesters, on all sides, and with good sergeantry and a prudent castellan'.¹⁰⁰

Among the newly built fortresses *Maine* and *Mistra*, together with the old *Monemvasia* and *Akrocorinth*, were noted as 'the keys' to William II of Villehardouin's land.¹⁰¹

Most of the notes just examined refer to castles and not to fortified towns. This is also the overall impression we get from the 'table of contents' where, as has been mentioned above, Clarentza and Patras

96. *Livre* para 355; *Chronikon* v. 5038H.

97. *Livre* para 693.

98. *Libro* para 485. Cf. Bon, *La Morée* 182; N.K. Moutsopoulos, «Νίκλι — Μούχλι», in *Ε' Πανελλήνιο ιστορικό συνέδριο: Πρακτικά* (Thessaloniki 1984) 158 (he dates the event to 1294).

99. *Livre* para 929. Cf. Bon, *La Morée* 178-9.

100. *Livre* para 930.

101. *Libro* para 298. *Mistra* ranks third in *Chronikon* and ninth in *Livre*.

are the only towns to appear. Once we hear of the castle of Modon having been refortified by the Venetians.¹⁰²

3. Power within the towns

The archons. Our sources speak only of 'the archons'/'the first' in *Constantinopolitan* society but a distinction is drawn between archons and common folk in the social picture of both western and Peloponnesian towns.¹⁰³ The Greek and the French versions of the 'Chronicle of the Morea' suggest that *Venetian* citizens can be viewed only as 'the *megistanoi*'/'the archons, the protoi'/'les nobles hommes'/'le gentil homme', on the one side, and there is 'to koinon'/'le peuple', on the other.¹⁰⁴

On Peloponnesian soil this phrasing refers to *Andravida* only but there is also the pairing of its archons and 'vourgeseoi'/'toute la bonte gent'.¹⁰⁵ The Aragonese version mentions 'los gentiles hombres who were' in *Monemvasia* at the time of its surrender to the Franks.¹⁰⁶ The «ἄλιος λαός» of the *chora* of *Corinth* who 'carried arms' in 1205 is mentioned once.¹⁰⁷ We also learn that the 'bourg' of the castle of *St. Helen* was the place where in 1302 'the archers . . . lived to

102. *Livre* p. 401. This is dated to 1294(?). Modon is labelled as *cit  * by Villehardouin (paras 328-9). Other castles mentioned in the 'table of contents' are, to repeat, Kalamata and St. George; *Skorta* is also represented by the castles of St. Helen, Crivecuier, Karytaina, and Mategrifon [Akova, on the border with Mesarea]; *Elis* — by Clermont [Chlemoutsis] and Beauvoir [Pontiko]; *Corinthia* — by Poliphant [Polyphengos] (*Livre* pp. 400, 401, 403, 405).

103. *Chronikon* vv. 554 ('the young archons' in the City), 595. Cf. *Livre* para 54: 'li autre gentil homme'. This distinction was familiar to the Western sources at the time of the conquest. — Ilieva, *Frankish Morea* 95 with the references there cited.

104. *Chronikon* vv. 342-3, 351-2; *Livre* para 16.

105. *Chronikon* vv. 1435 and 2255-6; *Livre* paras 152, 154.

106. *Libro* para 212. The Mamonas, Daimonogiannes and Sophianos who delivered the keys of the castle of *Monemvasia* to William II of Villehardouin were given gifts in the Byzantine style — precious clothes, horses and lands: *Chronikon* vv. 2943-55. On the problem concerning the Greek archons and their identity see Ilieva, *Frankish Morea*, 85ff. The archons of *Nikli*, *Lakedaimon* and *Mistra* should join the company of those of *Andravida* and *Monemvasia* just mentioned. See below.

107. *Chronikon* v. 1471H (here P has «ἄλλος λαός»). Was it the retinue of Leon Sgouros?

guard the country'.¹⁰⁸ Finally, referring to the 1420s, the 'Chronicle of the Tocco' speaks of the Greek inhabitants of *Mistra* as 'the archons and the citizens' or 'the megistanoi, the archons, all Mistriots . . . small and great' (vv. 3647, 3865-7).

The burgesses. The body of the freemen was not entirely amorphous in the cities of Outremer.¹⁰⁹ Generally speaking, the economically active part of the town, its 'bourgeois' part, was the 'bourg'.¹¹⁰ The burgesses of the Principality are mentioned twice in the 'Chronicle of the Morea'.¹¹¹ Those of *Andravida* and *Clarentza* are specifically singled out.¹¹² It seems that in all these cases Franks are being referred to, although the status of the Greek urban population under the new regime is still debatable. It has been assumed that until the mid-fourteenth century free citizens have hardly ever been mentioned, apart from the archons.¹¹³ The evidence of the 'Tocco chronicle' can be of some help here. For 1407 it speaks of the 'powerful and extremely rich archons' and the 'great, renowned and rich retailers of the *chora* of *Clarentza*' (vv. 649-50). To the chronicler of the Tocco family *Clarentza* appears as the horn of plenty: 'the town was nice and the mansions opulent . . . who is capable of recounting the goods, the wealth, the cloths, the attires of the town of *Clarentza*!' (vv. 648, 651-2).

IV. The landscape

Our sources show little, if any, interest in town morphology. What we can learn from our texts most often concerns settlements referred to as *kastra* or the upper fortified parts of towns.

108. *Livre* para 929. We know that the archers in Latin Morea were Greeks. — J. Longnon and P. Topping (eds.), *Documents sur le R  gime des terres dans la Principaut   de Mor  e au XIVe s.* (Paris 1969) p. 65 l. 16. Cf. the «  χωρη  τες» left to guard the *chora* of *Clarentza* for the Prince during summertime. — *Chron. Tocco*, vv. 543-4, 566.

109. Prawer, 'Crusader cities' 194 (as in n. 72 above).

110. Le Goff, 'Guerriers et bourgeois' 225.

111. *Chronikon* vv. 3209, 8632H; *Livre* para 595.

112. *Chronikon* v. 5848; *Libro* paras 167, 565; *Livre* para 854. Long ago J. Longnon considered the bourgeoisie of *Clarentza* to have formed 'a financial aristocracy': *Livre* ci, on the evidence of para 794 where this social group is said to have lent money for the ransom of the barons captured by Roger of Lloria in 1292.

113. Jacoby, 'Les   tats latins' 35, 41, 48 (as in n. 4 above).

In 1279 Geoffroy of Briel the Younger managed to regain by fraud the castle of *Araklovon*.¹¹⁴ While pretending to suffer from a stomach disorder and to be in need of the medicinal water in the wells of the castle, he was given 'the best chamber of the tower', where the castellan himself had a chamber.¹¹⁵ The gate of the castle was made of wood.¹¹⁶ Below, in the 'bourg' there was a tavern where the castellan and the sergeants of the castle used to go.¹¹⁷

In 1292 or 1294 'the Slavs of Giannitza' managed to take by fraud another castle, that of *Kalamata*, in the sector of the donjon described as being 'entirely outside the castle'.¹¹⁸

We frequently hear of prisons in Peloponnesian castles. One passage that is worth mentioning concerns the twelve 'villani' who were found in the prison of *Araklovon* in 1279, during Geoffroy of Briel the Younger's adventure.¹¹⁹

The Greek version of the 'Chronicle of the Morea' speaks of mansions ('hospitia'/'oikoi') in *Coron*, *Lakedaimon* and *Monemvasia*.¹²⁰ In 1407 the archons (Greeks and Albanians) of the Epirote expedition against *Clarentza*, having captured the citadel, 'enjoyed and rejoiced in the palace where the chambers were very nice and well-appointed'.¹²¹ In *Patras* the palace of the archbishop was also up in the castle.¹²²

In the vicinity of *Nikli* a church is noted where the Franks used to make 'feasts and festivities'; 'another feast took place [at a distance of] three or four miles away from the [same] town'.¹²³

114. On the episode see Bon, *La Morée* 155, 370-1 n. 2.

115. *Livre* para 565; *Libro* para 435.

116. *Chronikon* v. 8311; *Livre* para 572. Cf. *Libro* paras 436-40, speaking of many gates.

117. *Livre* para 571; *Cronaca* 463.

118. *Livre* para 694. Cf. Bon, *La Morée* 168.

119. *Cronaca* 464. Cf. *Chronikon* v. 8318 ('twelve villeins and Romans' [303]); *Livre* paras 572, 575 ('bien une douzaine'); *Libro* para 438 (four Greek prisoners only).

120. *Chronikon* vv. 1706H/P (in the *kastro* of *Coron*); 2060, 2317H/P (the princely mansions in the *chora* of *Lakedaimon*); 2922 (in the *kastro* of *Monemvasia*). On houses in the 'bourg' of the castle of *St. Helen* see *Livre* para 929.

121. *Chron. Tocco* vv. 635-9.

122. *Ibidem* vv. 3807-9.

123. *Libro* paras 476, 478.

VI. Perception

It is the *kastro* that receive most attention in our texts. An appropriate start for my survey is to be found in the telling statement by the 'Tocco chronicle': 'At that time [1407] and *Clarentza*, too, had the fame of being among the *beautiful and fine* castles of the *Morea*'.¹²⁴ Generally speaking, three groups of epithets are discernible.

1) The first stresses the position of the settlement in the tradition of the conquest and in the life of the Principality. 'Vasilikon', 'roial'/'real' and 'noble' all refer to the castle of *Corinth* [*Akrocorinth*].¹²⁵ Furthermore, for the compiler of *Livre* 'noble' is not only 'the city of *Corinth*' (paras 1009, 1016 referring to the parliament of 1305), but also are the castles of *Kalamata*,¹²⁶ *Nauplion* (paras 223, 870); *Monemvasia*, *Mistra*, *Grand Magne* (para 319); *Karytaina* (paras 349, 463);¹²⁷ *Bucelet* (para 578); *Mategrifon/Akova*¹²⁸ and *St. George* in the *Skorta*.¹²⁹ Two settlements receive the epithet of 'bonnes': the the castle of *Beaufort* in *Skota*¹³⁰ and *Lakedaimon*.¹³¹

2) The second expounds aesthetic notions. Here we find: 'lampros' — for the castles of *Mistra*, *Karytaina* and *Pontiko/Beauvoir* in *Elis*;¹³² 'kalos/to kallion' — for those of [*Akro*] *corinth*,¹³³ *Pontiko* and *Akova*.¹³⁴

3) The third singles out some castles as fortified places or weak strongholds: 'apolemiton',¹³⁵ 'phoveron' — for the castles of [*Akro*] *corinth*,

124. *Chron. Tocco* vv. 653-4.

125. *Chronikon* v. 2825; *Livre* paras 94 ('de toute Romanie'), 189, 194, 223, 662; 191, 195.

126. paras 125, 801. Cf. para 709: the castle of *Kalamata* is one of the best ['meillor'] castles in the *Morea*.

127. Cf. *Libro* para 653. *Karytaina* ranks fifth in the Aragonese version.

128. para 653. It tanks sixth in *Livre*.

129. paras 653, 816. Cf. *Libro* para 653.

130. *Livre* para 930.

131. *Livre* para 395: it was 'une bonne marche pour gents et pour chevaux'. Note the meaning of 'marche' as 'borderland'. Cf. *Chronikon* vv. 5592-4.

132. *Chronikon* vv. 2991, 6615, 1190-1H. For the Greek version the castle of *Mistra* is «ὁμορφότερον», too (v. 4331).

133. *Ibidem* vv. 1445-9H ('of Romania'; v. 1445P — 'of *Morea*').

134. *Ibidem* vv. 1190P, 1915P. Does this phrasing parallel the Old French 'bon'? Cf. *Chr. Tocco* on *Clarentza* (as in n. 124 above) and below.

135. *Chronikon* v. 2898 (for the castle of *Monemvasia*).

and *Akova*,¹³⁶ 'dynaton' — for those of [*Akro*] *corinth*, *Nauplion*, *Monemvasia* and *Argos*;¹³⁷ 'mega' or 'omorphon dynamaris';¹³⁸ 'aphiron'/'aphiromenon'/'le plus fort'/'fort'/'mucho (or 'mas') fuer'/'fortissimo' — for the castles of *Argos*,¹³⁹ *Coron*,¹⁴⁰ *Araklovon*,¹⁴¹ *Karytaina*,¹⁴² [*Akro*] *corinth*,¹⁴³ *Monemvasia*,¹⁴⁴ *Gardiki*,¹⁴⁵ *Nauplion*,¹⁴⁶ 'kala sotarchismenon'/'(muy) bien guarnido' or 'mal furny de gent' — for those of *Karytaina*,¹⁴⁷ [*Akro*] *corinth*, *Nauplion*, *Monemvasia*, *Argos*,¹⁴⁸ *Crievecuer* and *St. Helen in Skorta*;¹⁴⁹ 'achamnon'/'achamnoteron'/'foible de murs' — for those of *Pontiko*, *Coron*, *Kalamata*, the lower [Greek] castle of *Nauplion*,¹⁵⁰ and *St. Helen*;¹⁵¹ 'monaxon' — for the castle of *Kalamata*.¹⁵² However, the 'Tocco chronicle' considers the latter as 'dynaton'.¹⁵³

What is most important about these qualifications is that among the abstract, 'virtual' epithets the notion of nobility is peculiar to the French text while that of beautifulness — to *Chronikon*. As for the 'concrete' qualifications it is the Greek version that offers a greater variety. Certainly of importance is that *Arkadia* — the image of which is expected to be excelling in view of the suggested origin of both

136. *Ibidem* vv. 1445, 3159.

137. *Chronikon* vv. 2085-7.

138. *Ibidem* v. 2991 (for the castle of *Mistra*).

139. *Ibidem* v. 1524; *Cronaca* 430.

140. *Chronikon* v. 1698.

141. *Ibidem* vv. 1761, 8274; *Livre* para 571 (of the barony).

142. *Chronikon* v. 3154; *Libro* para 661.

143. *Ibidem* para 92; *Livre* para 104; *Cronaca* 430. Cf. Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral, vol. 2 (Paris 1939), paras 301, 324 where *Corinth* and *Nauplion* are reported to have been among 'des plus fors/des plus fort citez desoz ciel/dou monde'.

144. *Ibidem*; *Livre* para 189: 'li plus loyal e li plus fort de tout le pays'.

145. *Libro* paras 714, 722.

146. *Cronaca* 430.

147. *Libro* para 661.

148. *Ibidem* para 92 (*Akrocorinth*); *Chronikon* vv. 2085-7.

149. *Livre* paras 928-9.

150. *Chronikon* vv. 1675; 1697 (for the castle of *Coron* which had low walls and towers); 1712H; 2873.

151. See n. 149 above.

152. *Chronikon* v. 1712P.

153. vv. 3542. Cf. v. 3524 for *Mantineia*.

H's text and *Libro* — is absent from the above picture. Finally, if we compare the repertory of the *chansons* (as in nn. 6-7 above) with that of our sources we shall notice the lack of opulence and grandeur and the emphasising on fortification.

VII. Some conclusions

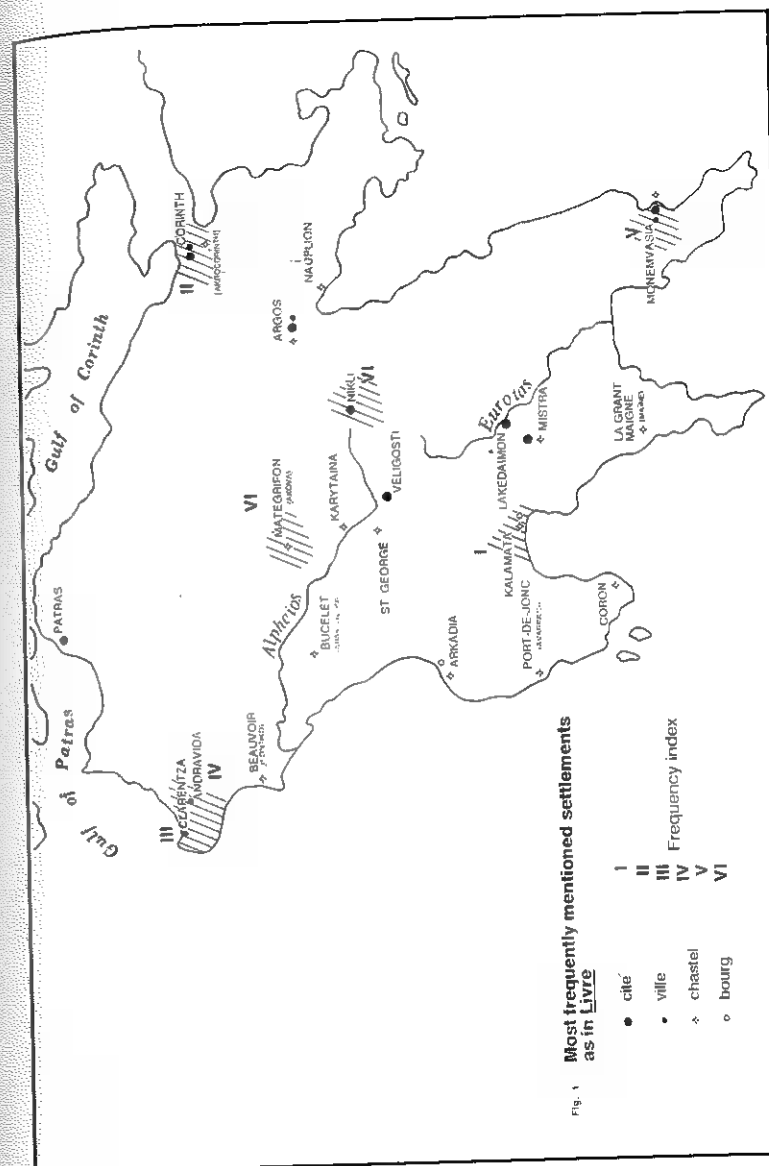
In the bilingual and bicultural societies after the Fourth Crusade where a Greek milieu was forced to co-exist with a superimposed Frankish community, towns became both foci of togetherness or antagonism. Figs. 1-3 suggest that the French version has a stronger affiliation with the princely domain while *Chronikon* and *Libro* — with the administrative centres and the newly established *Clarentza*. No common French model can serve to explain such affiliations. Both the French and the Greek versions however betray an implicit notion of frontiership geographically located along the curve *Monemvasia-Lakedaimon* and *Mistra-Veligosti-Nikli*. Apart from *Patras* all the 'cités' of *Livre* lie along this curve, extended towards *Argos* and *Corinth*. For the Aragonese text the frontier 'captured' seems somewhat further to the northwest, in *Skorta*.

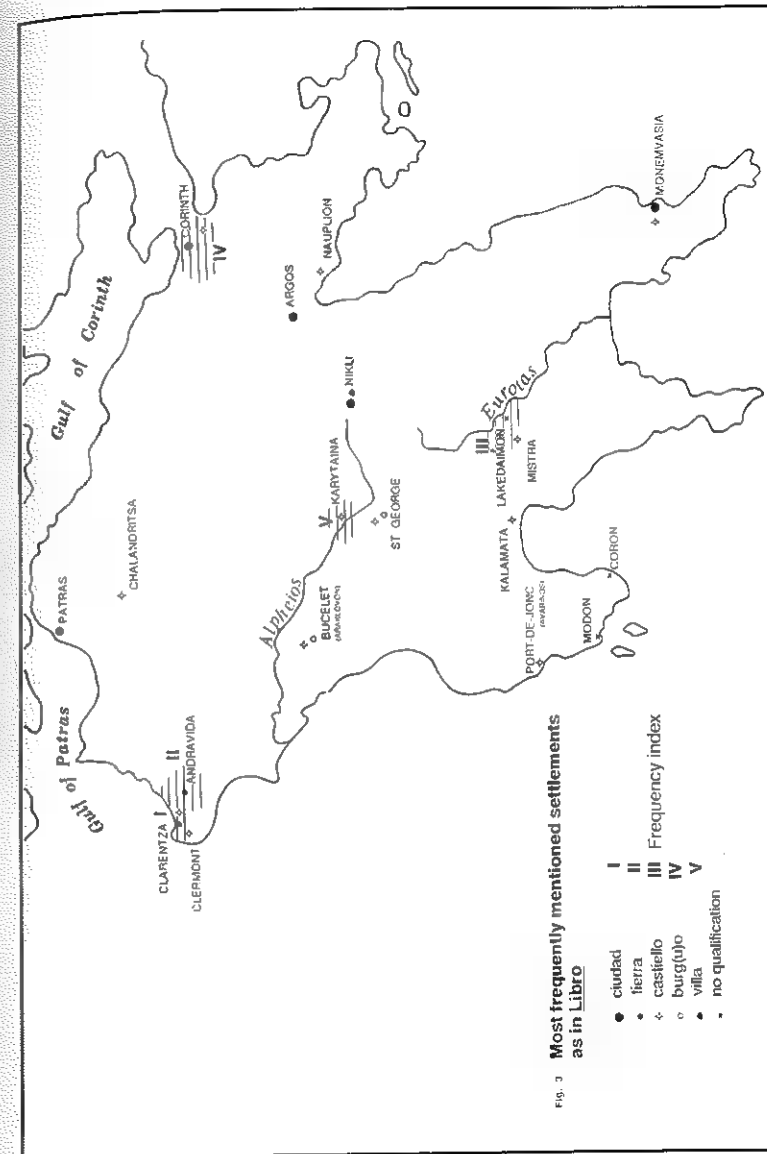
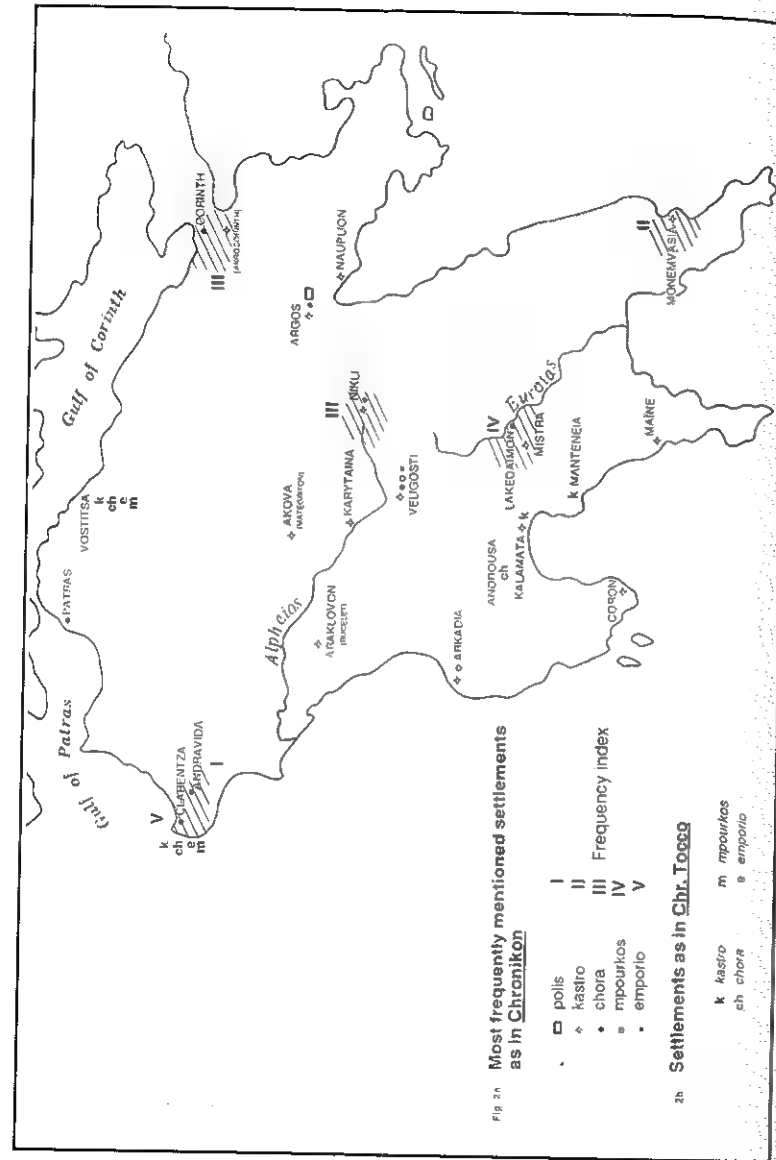
In terms of 'terminology' the unique reference to *Argos* as *polis* could have been influenced by a French 'cité'. Most significant is the usage of *kastron* not only as the equivalent of town. An opposition between *kastron* as castle and outer settlement is discernible. Thus, in our texts *chora*, while in general still designating a town of importance, also refers to a lower unfortified town (*Argos*) and to an outer — fortified (*Patras*, *Corinth*), or unfortified (*Nikli*, *Veligosti*) — town. The fact that in *Chronikon* it is the only label of *Clarentza* — the walling of which *Bon* dates to the thirteenth century — while the *kastron* emerges in the later 'Chronicle of the Tocco', cannot therefore be attributed to a translation from a French 'ville'.¹⁵⁴

154. On *Bon's* statement see *La Morée* 323-4. *Libro's* para 217 however might be coming from a Greek phrasing.

The later Epirote text, as we saw, is specifically interested in pillage and conquest, also attesting to economic and social development: it is this 'chronicle' that masters the notions of opulence and fascination lacking in the 'Chronicle of the Morea'. The wary fortress mentality of the Moreot compilers echoes what Raimbault of Vacqueyras preached in the summer of 1205.

Sofia, Bulgaria





Conversion from Greek Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism in the Fourteenth Century¹

TIA M. KOLBABA

Several prominent Byzantines, including the Emperor John V Palaiologos, converted to Roman Catholicism in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This may seem an odd sort of conversion. After all, if the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith are contained in the Nicene Creed, then Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic believers differ on only one tenet: whether the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father or from the Father and the Son — the *Filioque* issue. For a Christian to admit the double procession of the Holy Spirit is hardly on the same level as admitting that Mohammed is the prophet of the one God. Indeed, many members of each church have been willing to call the procession of the Holy Spirit unknowable and leave it at that.

Nevertheless, scholars writing about Greeks who moved to the West after the millennium, or about Latins who moved to the East, routinely refer to the 'conversions' of the expatriates. So, for example, D.M. Nicol notes that Latins who wanted to be integrated into Greek society had to adopt the Greek language, intermarry with Greeks, and 'convert' to Orthodoxy. Princesses from the West who married into the Byzantine imperial family also had to convert. In one of the most interesting cases, Maria of Hungary first 'converted' from Catholicism to Orthodoxy when she married Isaac II, then 'converted' back to Roman Catholicism when she married Boniface of Montferrat after

1. A shorter version of this paper was originally delivered at a conference entitled 'Conversion, Subversion, Perversion. Aspects of Change in the Middle Ages', Princeton University, April 4, 1992. I am grateful to the participants in that conference for their input. At that time, my work was being supported by the Mellon Foundation's dissertation-year fellowship. My thanks also to Robert Sinkewicz, who read an early draft of the paper and provided me with constructive criticism and helpful suggestions. Where I have erred, it is not for lack of good advice. My mistakes remain my own.

Isaac's death.² This article deals with another such 'convert' — Barlaam the Calabrian, who made his name as a philosopher and an anti-Latin polemicist in Constantinople, but ended his life as the Roman Catholic bishop of Gerace in southern Italy.

Before we can begin an analysis of Barlaam's motives for conversion, I should note that I am not going to define conversion in any abstract sense. Although many illustrious scholars have demonstrated what can be accomplished by the study of conversion as a common phenomenon across different eras and different faiths, such a cross-cultural or global description of conversion is not the purpose of this article. Instead, I merely want to be more explicit about what certain people did which led to their being described as 'converts'. Then I want to discuss why at least one person — Barlaam the Calabrian — did it.

That an individual in the eleventh century or later had to choose between the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople is a fact. However odd this 'conversion' may seem to us, it is clear that both sides considered it necessary. The patriarchal synod had a standard oath for Latins who wished to join the Greek Church. In the many cases recorded in the patriarchal *Acta*, Latin converts not only recited the creed in its Greek form but also explicitly abjured all Latin errors. One example can serve to illustrate the rest, for the oath was formulaic and often repeated. In March 1384, a certain Titos, 'who comes from the Latins' signed the following profession of faith:

I believe in one God, etc. In addition, I reject the addition made by the Latins to the holy Symbol itself, the addition which says that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from the Son. I believe and I confess that [the Spirit] proceeds from the Father alone, and I reject all of their customs, their way of government, and their way of life — whatever things are outside the holy catholic church of the Christians, the commandments of the holy apostles, and the holy and God-bearing fathers. And I accept and understand all that the holy church of Constantinople [accepts], and I wholeheartedly and purely submit myself to our all-holy emperor, to the ecumenical patriarch, and to the divine and holy synod.³

2. D.M. Nicol, 'Symbiosis and Integration. Some Greco-Latin Families in Byzantium in the 11th to 13th Centuries', *BF* 7 (1979) 119.

3. Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi*, vol. 2, *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitani 1315-1402, tomus posterior* (Vienna 1968) 84, doc.

Sometimes these oaths explicitly call Latin beliefs 'heresy'. Sometimes the convert must explicitly reject the liturgical forms [$\tau\omicron$ $\sigma\acute{\epsilon}\beta\alpha\varsigma$] of the Latins.⁴

So, too, when a Greek joined the Latin Church, he had to renounce his past 'errors' and accept certain tenets of the Roman Church, including papal primacy. We have extensive evidence about what such a conversion involved in the case of the most prominent convert of the fourteenth century, the Emperor John V Palaiologos.

On October 18, 1369, in the apartment of Nicolas Cardinal de Bessia at the Hospital of the Holy Spirit 'in Sassia' in Rome, John V appeared with members of his entourage. In the presence of his companions and several Roman cardinals, as well as three notaries, John V publicly accepted, signed, and sealed a profession of faith.⁵ This document was similar to the confession of faith which popes had been presenting to emperors since the time of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259-1282). In a letter to Michael VIII, Pope Clement IV (1265-1268) had laid down his conditions for readmitting 'schismatic' Greeks to the 'mother-Church' of Rome: acceptance of the *Filioque* clause in the creed; acceptance of the doctrine of purgatory and of various other doctrines regarding the efficacy of masses, prayers, and alms for the dead; recognition of confirmation only by bishops; the use of only unleavened bread in the eucharist; and acceptance of the doctrine of transsubstantiation. Finally, on all matters not explicitly addressed, the popes insisted that they themselves were the ultimate authority. If there was a doctrinal disagreement between Rome and Constantinople, Rome was, by this definition of papal primacy, correct. All Greek calls for a council to debate these issues were in vain. As Clement IV put it,

Moreover, this aforementioned . . . truth [papal primacy] is consonant with evangelical teaching, handed down by the Holy Fathers, and confirmed by

#376. Other examples of conversion oaths, *Ibid.*, 8-9, 48, 159, 160, 296, 343, 344, 449, 454, 488, 490.

4. E.g., *ibid.*, p.84.

5. Oskar Halecki, *Un empereur de Byzance à Rome* (Warsaw 1930; repr. London 1972) 195-198. See Franz Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*, 5 (Munich and Berlin 1965) 58-59, doc. #3120, 3122, 3126.

definition of the Roman pontiffs in their holy councils, so that it is neither fitting nor desirable to subject it to new discussions and definitions. . . . So, although you propose the convocation of a council in your previous letters, although you ask for a council to be convoked in your land, We in no way at all propose to convoke a council for discussion and definition of this sort.⁶

A century after Clement IV's letter, John V agreed to all of these terms. But his conversion did not end there. On October 21, 1369, the emperor's submission to the mother church was acknowledged in a public ritual. On that day, Urban V processed from the Vatican to a seat prepared for him on the steps of St. Peter's basilica. In full pontifical regalia and with the College of Cardinals surrounding him, he awaited John V and his entourage. When the emperor arrived, he genuflected in front of the pope three times, and kissed the pope's feet, hands, and mouth. Lifting him up by the hand, the pope chanted the *Te Deum* there on the steps. Then they entered the basilica together, where Urban celebrated Mass in John's presence.⁷

Thus John V provides us with an example of what Greeks had to do in order to be received into communion with the Roman Church. The public ceremony on the steps of St. Peter's was a special event, of course. The conversion of an emperor was, after all, more important than the conversion of a mere scholar like Barlaam. Nevertheless, an explicit renunciation of some tenets of the Greek church and an explicit acceptance of other tenets of the Roman church was considered necessary. This renunciation and acceptance make up what I call 'conversion' from the Greek to the Roman church in the high and late Middle Ages.

Possible questions regarding the nature and causes of such conversions abound. It is impossible to generalise about the motives of converts. Obviously Maria of Hungary's motives were different from John V's, which differed, in turn, from the Cardinal Bessarion's. Although I will venture some generalisations in the conclusion, the subject of this paper is one convert and his individual, possibly

6. For Clement IV's letter to Michael VIII, see A.L. Tautu, *Acta Urbani IV, Clementis IV, Gregorii X (1261-1276)* (Vatican City 1953) 65-67 (doc. 23). For a description of the document which John V signed in 1369, see Halecki, *op. cit.* 346-ff.

7. Halecki, *op. cit.* 198-199.

idiosyncratic, motives for conversion. We are fortunate that the convert in question was self-centred and a prolific writer. His correspondence and treatises make an analysis of his motives, if not utterly straightforward, at least possible.

Barlaam the Calabrian was born c. 1290 in Seminara, Calabria. His primary education probably took place in an Orthodox monastery in southern Italy. Growing up Greek in Calabria in this period, he would have known that the Roman church was trying sporadically to enforce the Roman rite there, and he may have followed some of the contemporary developments in Latin theology and philosophy. Around 1326 he went to Thessaloniki for further education, and then, c. 1330, to Constantinople. In Constantinople, he found favour with the Great Domestic and the Emperor, and was appointed official interpreter of Pseudo-Dionysius. In 1334/35 he acted as the principal Greek negotiator and debater in a series of discussions with papal legates.

At about this same time Barlaam first came to the attention of Gregory Palamas. A leader among monks and an important theologian, Palamas was to loom large in Barlaam's life. In 1336 Palamas read one of Barlaam's works, probably an anti-Latin treatise on the subject of the knowledge of God.⁸ Barlaam, ever the master polemicist, specialised in anti-Latin treatises: between 1334 and 1341 he wrote twenty-one of them, a tribute to his stamina, if nothing

8. The dating of Barlaam's 21 anti-Latin treatises and the relation of each treatise or group of treatises to the others and to the Palamite controversy has been the subject of many articles and footnotes. Most recently, Robert Sinkewicz, Ioannis Kakridis, and Antonis Fyrigos have proposed divergent chronologies and divergent ideas of the redactions of some treatises: I. Kakridis, *Codex 88 des Klosters Decani und eine griechischen Vorlagen* (Munich 1988) 97, 106-110, 126-130; R.E. Sinkewicz, 'A New Interpretation for the First Episode in the Controversy between Barlaam the Calabrian and Gregory Palamas', *Journal of Theological Studies*, new series 31 (1980) 489-500; *Idem*, 'The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God in the Early Writings of Barlaam the Calabrian', *Mediaeval Studies* 44 (1982) 183-184; A. Fyrigos, 'La produzione letteraria antilatina di Barlaam Calabro', *OCP* 45 (1979) 115-116. I join these authors in stating that a definitive chronology and account will be possible only when all twenty-one treatises have been edited with due attention to the ways in which those treatises have been transmitted. See also my discussion of this issue in 'Barlaam the Calabrian. Three Treatises on Papal Primacy', *REB* 53 (1995) [forthcoming].

else.⁹ Palamas disliked both the form and the content of the treatise in question. When the Calabrian added insult to injury by criticising the practices and teachings of hesychast monks — of which Palamas himself was one — Palamas set himself up as the defender of his brethren, and battle was joined. The quarrel between Barlaam and Palamas involved both emperor and patriarch by 1339. At this point, the emperor sent Barlaam to the west on a secret mission to the pope. The trip gave both sides a cooling-off period, but the quarrel continued after his return. It culminated in Barlaam's condemnation by the patriarchal synod in 1341.¹⁰ In the Greek church, his name and ideas are still anathema.

Barlaam, now *persona non grata* in the East, left Constantinople for the West. He went first to Naples, and then to Avignon in early 1342, where he re-established contacts he had made there during his visit in 1339. Sometime in 1342 he officially professed allegiance to the Roman Church, and in October 1342 the pope appointed him bishop of Gerace in Calabria.¹¹ He appeared on the international scene for the last time in 1345 as a member of a papal embassy to Constantinople.¹² Most of the rest of his life was spent in Gerace, where he died of the plague in 1348.¹³

9. For a complete list of Barlaam's works, see Robert E. Sinkewicz, 'The Solutions addressed to George Lapithes by Barlaam the Calabrian and their Philosophical Context', *Mediaeval Studies* 43 (1981) 185-194.

10. There are many versions of the Palamite controversy. For a good recent summary with primary-source documentation see Angela Constantinides Hero, ed., trans., *Letters of Gregory Akindynos* (Washington, D.C. 1983; *CFHB* 21) xi-xxxiii.

11. A.L. Tautu, *Acta Clementis VI PP. (1342-1352)* (Vatican City 1960; Pontificia commissio ad redigendum codicem iuris canonici orientalis, fontes, series III, vol. 9) 20-21 (doc. 10).

12. Francesco Russo, *Regesto Vaticano per la Calabria*, vol. 1 (Rome 1974) 427 (doc. #6816); Francesco Lo Parco, *Petrarca e Barlaam* (Calabria 1905) 117-118.

13. Tautu, *Acta Clementis VI* 219-220 (doc. #135). For the whole of this biography cf. Martin Jugie, 'Barlaam de Seminara', *DHGE* 6 (Paris 1932) 817-834; *Idem*, 'Barlaam est-il né catholique, suivi d'une note sur la date de sa mort', *EO* 39 (1940) 100-125; Sinkewicz, 'The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God in the Early Writings of Barlaam the Calabrian', *Mediaeval Studies* 44 (1982) 183-186. I have omitted discussion of disagreements about some details in this chronological outline, presenting a consensus opinion, but the reader should be aware that such disagreements exist. Cf. the works of Jugie cited above; Jean Meyendorff, 'Les débuts de la controverse hésychaste', *B 23* (1953) 90-96, reprinted in *Idem*, *Byzantine Hesychasm: Historical, Theological, and Social Problems* (London 1974) art. I.

The nature and significance of Barlaam's conversion has been the subject of debate since 1342. During his own life, the Palamite faction portrayed him as a Latin impostor who valued human knowledge over Christian revelation and sought his own advancement at all cost. In general, modern scholars who have relied on Palamite accounts have accepted this portrayal. In this view, Barlaam's 'conversion' to Roman Catholicism was partly a result of shrewd calculation of his personal advantage and partly an acknowledgement of what he had been all along — a Latin at heart. Some even suggest that he had been a sort of Fifth Column man all along — a believer in Latin ideas who sought to undermine the Greek Church with heretical Latin notions. Other scholars accept that he was really Orthodox for a while, but maintain that intellectual renown was more important to him than religion. After he had lost all hope of a scholarly career in the Byzantine capital, the only path to glory left open was in the Roman Church. And the only way to have a career in the Roman Church was to renounce his Greek beliefs. Therefore he responded as any opportunist would: he 'converted'.¹⁴

Other scholars, relying on Western accounts of Barlaam, have portrayed him as a tolerant, open-minded, magnanimous soul with an admirable grasp of the differences which divided the two churches. His arguments, according to this view, were always courteous, logical, eloquent, and sincere. Recognising that the Roman Church was the right and true one, professing the right and true doctrines, he naturally converted.¹⁵

It is no coincidence that Barlaam's calumniators are almost exclusively Orthodox, while his supporters are almost exclusively Roman Catholic. Even if one can get beyond confessional bias, however, this debate about Barlaam's 'real' reasons for converting has a fundamental problem. In its concern with the innermost thoughts

14. See, for example, Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York 1974) 103, 105; Idem, 'Humanisme nominaliste et mystique chrétienne à Byzance au XIV^e siècle', *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 79 (1957) 906-910, reprinted in *Byzantine Hesychasm* art. VI; Idem, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (London 1964) 42, 48, 116, 117.

15. See Jugie, 'Barlaam de Seminara' 819, 822, 826, 830-834; G. Mandalari, *Fra Barlaamo Calabrese, maestro del Petrarca* (Rome 1888) 54-55.

and motives of the Calabrian, it poses a question which is ultimately unanswerable. We can never know how deeply attached Barlaam was to Orthodoxy or how deeply transformed when he decided to adopt Catholicism. Even if he himself had left us 'Confessions' or some such introspective text, some of us would believe him and others would not.

We can, however, do our best to understand what the Calabrian's theological, non-autobiographical writings can tell us about his external conversion — that is, about his reasons for switching allegiance from the Constantinopolitan church to the Roman. Here the scholar who wants to study Barlaam's conversion is blessed indeed. For Barlaam not only wrote twenty-one Greek anti-Latin treatises on the *Filioque*, papal primacy, and similar points of contention; after his move to the West he also wrote various pro-Latin letters to his fellow Greeks. The two bodies of polemic vary not only with regard to specific arguments, but also in emphasis, tone, and — especially — assumptions. By emphasising different points and beginning with different assumptions, Barlaam himself has provided us with some clues about his conversion.

Most of Barlaam's works, including twenty of the twenty-one anti-Latin treatises have never been published. However, the twenty-first of the anti-Latin treatises is available in MPG,¹⁶ and I have recently re-edited it and edited the other two treatises on the same subject: papal primacy.¹⁷ Barlaam's Greek works on this subject are thus accessible. Still more fortunately, Barlaam dealt with this subject again after his conversion in one of his letters *Pro Latinis*, also published in MPG.

The three Greek treatises on papal primacy are closely related to one another. In fact, the first two serve primarily as earlier versions of the third, which includes additional supporting arguments for almost every point. For that reason, I will refer primarily to the third and

16. MPG 151, 1255-1280.

17. The treatises on papal primacy are called AL 7, AL 12, and AL 21 by Sinkewicz (see the inventory cited in note 7 above, pp. 188-189). The new edition, with an introduction, commentary, and translation, will appear in *REB* 53 (1995). Since this edition is not yet available, I have also cited the MPG version.

final version.¹⁸ The main points of the third treatise are as follows: All powers which were given to Peter were given to all the apostles equally.¹⁹ The apostles appointed as their successors local bishops in various cities, of which Clement, the bishop of Rome, was one; Clement was not appointed bishop of the whole church.²⁰ No other apostle left a single successor, so it is ridiculous to say that Peter did so.²¹ Peter did not ordain and depose other apostles; therefore, the pope cannot ordain and depose other patriarchs even if he is Peter's successor.²² Rome was made first see eventually, but this was a result of its status as the capital of the empire; its status was not conferred by Peter.²³ The pope's primacy, as granted by emperors and councils, was one of honour only.²⁴ Popes did not rule the councils.²⁵ Papal jurisdiction is limited to the Western churches, as other patriarchal jurisdictions are also limited.²⁶ No patriarch can promulgate new doctrines without the consent of the others.²⁷ The current popes are heretics, and the argument that a pope cannot be a heretic because no previous pope was a heretic is ridiculous.²⁸ Roman Catholic is an oxymoron; 'catholic' means 'whole, entire', while 'Roman' refers to a specific, limited place.²⁹

After his conversion, Barlaam wrote, in Latin, a letter entitled, 'The Bishop Barlaam, to his Greek friends both regarding the primacy of the Roman Church and regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit.'³⁰ In this letter, the order of the argument regarding papal primacy is roughly as follows: God desires one ruling principle in all things, for the good of order.³¹ Jesus gave Peter special powers

18. I.e., AL 21. Support for the contention that this is the most complete, final version is contained in the introduction to Barlaam's three treatises on papal primacy (note 8 above).

19. AL 21 para. 3; MPG 151, 1258-1260.

20. *Ibid.* para. 5; MPG 151, 1260, 1262-1263.

21. *Ibid.* para. 6; MPG 161, 1263-1265.

22. *Ibid.* para. 6 and 11-13; MPG 151, 1265, 1268.

23. *Ibid.* para. 7-10; MPG 151, 1265-1268.

24. *Ibid.* para. 14; MPG 151, 1269-1270.

25. *Ibid.* para. 15; MPG 151, 1270-1271.

26. *Ibid.* para. 16; MPG 151, 1271.

27. *Ibid.* para. 17; MPG 151, 1271-1273.

28. *Ibid.* para. 18-19; MPG 151, 1273-1274.

29. *Ibid.* para. 20; MPG 151, 1274-1276.

30. MPG 151, 1271-1282.

31. *Ibid.* 1271-1272.

and commands which made him ruler of the apostles.³² Peter bequeathed that primacy to Clement.³³ Heresy has always arisen in places far from Rome; and although one early pope was a heretic, the church of Rome quickly saw his heresy and threw him out.³⁴ It is because of this orthodoxy that from the time of Constantine I the Roman church has been recognised as the ultimate authority. There is even historical precedent for a pope deposing a patriarch.³⁵ General councils were never valid without the pope, although they could be valid without other patriarchs.³⁶ Rome was the supreme city, honoured by God for the Roman love of laws and justice, even before the Incarnation.³⁷ Again, there must be one church that is preeminent, because God likes one principle.³⁸ Today it is clear that the Roman church is that supreme church, for it is honoured with men of great virtue, wisdom, knowledge, talent, power, etc. — far superior to the East.³⁹ The Roman church is free from the whims of secular princes, while Eastern churches are subject to tyrants.⁴⁰ In his letter *Pro Latinis* Barlaam-the-convert thus answers only three of the younger Barlaam's objections to papal primacy. Specifically, he gives evidence that Peter possessed special status granted by Jesus, that Peter passed on that status to Clement, and that the popes have always been the supreme defenders of orthodoxy. Would any of these arguments from the pen of the older Barlaam have convinced the younger? It does not seem likely. On the issues of Peter's and Clement's primacy, Barlaam's technique is to cite scriptural passages and then interpret them 'logically'. That is, he cites such passages as Jesus' commission to Peter to 'Feed my sheep', and then tells his readers what these passages 'really mean' in terms of contemporary church organisation.

32. *Ibid.* 1272-1274.

33. *Ibid.* 1274-1276.

34. *Ibid.* 1276-1278.

35. *Ibid.* 1277.

36. *Ibid.* 1277-1278.

37. *Ibid.* 1278-1279.

38. *Ibid.* 1279.

39. *Ibid.* 1279-1280.

40. *Ibid.* 1279.

These logical interpretations change, however, when some basic assumptions change — i.e., after Barlaam's conversion. Take, for example, the gospel passage where Jesus enjoins Peter to feed his sheep.⁴¹ In his Greek treatise, Barlaam writes,

And although he said to Peter alone, 'Feed my sheep', nevertheless the force of this command applies also to the rest [of the apostles], as is clear from their deeds. For what did Peter do that all the others did not do? After the descent of the Holy Spirit, did not each apostle take up his own part of the inhabited world and teach, . . . enlighten . . . , establish churches. . . ?⁴²

The converted Barlaam, alluding to passages where Jesus spoke to Peter alone, writes,

First of all, if Peter did not receive anything other than what the others received, then it is not easy to see another reason why he was saying these things to Peter alone, given that Wisdom does nothing in vain.⁴³

Yet if the Catholic Barlaam seems a bit more faithful to his Scriptural text here — after all, Jesus did say 'Feed my sheep' to Peter alone, and did at times single Peter out for special treatment — his Orthodox treatise has a stronger case when it comes to the 'power to bind and to loose' passage. In short, a reader with neither an Orthodox nor a Catholic bias finds no inherent superiority in either series of arguments.

Moreover, the pro-Latin Barlaam rarely addresses issues raised in his earlier treatises, and he never addresses the central argument of his own Greek writings, which primarily involves historical precedent and patristic tradition. In his Greek treatises Barlaam emphasises tradition. For every argument he makes about papal primacy, he has a supporting scriptural passage, conciliar canon, historical example, or patristic reference. Implicit in these writings is the idea that the greatest evil for the church is 'novelty'. Doctrine, a creed, the order of the church, can only be changed in a general

41. John 21:16.

42. AL 21 para. 3; *MPG* 151, 1259.

43. *MPG* 151, 1272-1273.

council and with the consent of all. No patriarch can make his own decisions on these points because he would not be following the precedent of the fathers. That precedent dictates that, if heresy arises, a general council must be convened to deal with it.

In contrast, Barlaam's Latin argument emphasises the present-day superiority of Rome. He reiterates that God likes a singularity of principle, one head of the church, a monarchy.⁴⁴ Since the Roman church is in every way superior to all the others, God's desire is obviously that Rome be the one head. The Roman Church '. . . is composed of men who excel others as much in wisdom and virtue as in power. . . . This church . . . exceeds [all the other churches] as much as possible in its quantity of civilised, educated men, in its knowledge, and in the kindness and honesty of its manners'.⁴⁵ All of this is in marked contrast to the humiliation and degradation of the church in Constantinople.

In short, the emphasis of the two works is wholly different. This difference provides an essential clue to Barlaam's reasons for conversion. Where the younger Barlaam sees the great evil of novelty, the older Barlaam sees the great evil of disorder. Not only in the letter in question, but also in other letters to Greeks, the pro-Latin Barlaam emphasises the orderliness of the western church and the disorder of the five-headed, divided eastern churches.⁴⁶ Moreover, the Latin church is free from the whims of tyrannical, perhaps even heretical, secular rulers.⁴⁷ In contrast, confusion reigns among the eastern churches, and some of them are led into heresy by their kings and princes.⁴⁸

Barlaam's admiration for Latin unity and unambiguous lines of authority has direct roots in his biography. When he wrote his anti-Latin treatises Barlaam was still in favour at the court in Constantinople. In the years to follow, he became involved in the dispute with Palamas which I described above. That controversy dragged on

44. For example, *MPG* 151, 1260B-1262B, 1271B-1272B.

45. *Ibid.* 1279C.

46. *Ibid.* 1262.

47. *Ibid.* 1279D-1280A.

48. *Ibid.* 1262A-1263A.

for several years. In the first skirmishes, Barlaam was victorious, but in the end he lost the war. He was excommunicated by the Greek church, and in that church his name is still anathematised. Palamas, on the other hand, was a hero and eventually a saint. While the debate between Barlaam and Palamas involved important theological issues, some of which remain controversial today, its resolution was not due to any clear and absolute inferiority of the anti-Palamite faction's arguments (for there was a faction; Barlaam was not alone in his objections to some of Palamas' teachings).⁴⁹ Rather, the emperor first tried to stop the controversy by forbidding any discussion on the subjects in question, then sided with Palamas for reasons which had as much to do with state politics as with the depth of imperial understanding of theology.

Barlaam saw his defeat, then, as a result both of a lack of indisputable authority at the head of the church and of imperial interference in the matter. Not that Barlaam would have been any happier if he had been condemned by a pope or any other authority. His friends agree with his enemies that he was an arrogant man who did not suffer correction gladly.⁵⁰ But his disgust at the muddled lines of authority in the Constantinopolitan church, which first vindicated his view and forbade Palamas to teach anything more, and later excommunicated Barlaam and revered Palamas is understandable.

There were other Byzantines who grew disgusted with the lack of order and authority in Constantinople and turned to the papacy and the West. In general, these men idealised the Western church. Another famous convert, Demetrios Kydones, called the Roman church '... a storehouse of all wisdom, bringing forth companies of philosophers, surrounded by groups of theologians, adorned with monks of manifold virtue. . . .'. In contrast to the wise and powerful popes, the patriarchs

49. Pace Father Meyendorff's accusations of 'nominalism', it is clear that the 'Barlaamite' faction had some legitimate concerns about Palamas' teachings and the practices of the hesychast monks which cannot simply be blamed on Latin influences, 'nominalist humanism', or a failure to appreciate Christian mystical traditions. See Meyendorff, 'Humanisme nominaliste et mystique chrétienne' and compare the far more sophisticated and nuanced view of Barlaam's ideas in Sinkewicz, 'Solutions' 165-185 and Idem, 'Doctrine of the Knowledge of God' 181.

50. For example, see Sinkewicz, 'Solutions' 153.

of Constantinople were weak men, subject to the emperor, negligent in their duties.⁵¹ Even the Cardinal Bessarion, who arrived in the West after the Great Schism and at the height of the conciliar movement, praised Rome for its order and power. These men were not perfectly accurate in their estimation of the unity, order, and brilliant culture of the Latins. In relative terms, however, the West had surpassed the empire of the East, which had dwindled to Constantinople and its environs and was constantly involved in civil war. Barlaam's conversion was as much a result of Constantinople's dwindling fortunes and the West's ascendant ones as it was of any brilliantly convincing theological debate.

Ihor Ševčenko has already asked the question: '... did the writings of intellectuals who lived through the last two centuries of Byzantium express awareness of, first, the Empire's political and, second, their own cultural decline?'⁵² His answer is that to a limited extent they did understand. Some men who remained Greek and Orthodox speculated about what the decline of their empire and society meant without reaching the conclusion that the future belonged to the Latins. Others, like Barlaam, responded to the eastern decline by turning to the West.

Edward Gibbon wrote,

In every age the Greeks were proud of their superiority in profane and religious knowledge: they had first received the light of Christianity; they had pronounced the decrees of the seven general councils; they alone possessed the language of Scripture and philosophy: nor should the barbarians, immersed in the darkness of the West, presume to argue on the high and mysterious questions of theological science.⁵³

Gibbon's description rings true in Byzantium's history before 1204. Before the Fourth Crusade, Greek condescension was noted and resented by all Western visitors. By Barlaam's time, however, some

51. Frances Kianka, 'The Apology of Demetrius Cydones: A Fourteenth-Century Autobiographical Source', *Byzantine Studies/Études Byzantines* 7, 1 (1980) 67.

52. Ihor Ševčenko, 'The Decline of Byzantium seen through the Eyes of its Intellectuals,' in *DOP* 15 (1961) 170.

53. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* ch. 60.

Greeks were beginning to think that intellectual superiority had passed to the West. While a great deal remains to be done in terms of comparing the high-profile converts to one another, I suspect that such future study will reveal that many of them, like Barlaam, were converted less by the theology of the Roman Church than by the wealth, power, libraries, and universities of western Europe.

Colgate University

On nine unpublished letters of the young Theotokas*

KATERINA KRIKOS-DAVIS

To the memory of Christina Dimitriadis-Damilakos

The nine letters to be discussed here were written by George Theotokas (1905-1966) in the space of ten months, that is, between the 20th of December 1922 and the 14th of October 1923.¹ This was the first year he spent in Greece and also his first year at the University of Athens where he studied law. Indeed, eight of these letters were sent from Athens and one (No. 8) from Leros where he stayed for part of his summer holidays. The recipient was Sophoclis Dimitriadis, an old school-friend. During the same period Dimitriadis was first in Vienna following a course of commercial studies, then back in Constantinople and finally in Bucharest for business reasons as the family firm had connections there. His own letters in reply have not been found nor indeed any of those which, presumably, Theotokas wrote to him in subsequent years. In the latter instance, the only exception is a card dated 13 September 1947 where he expresses regret for having seen Dimitriadis only once during that summer and explains that he had been too preoccupied with his father's illness. In fact, although their interests and professional lives were quite different (Theotokas a lawyer but first and foremost a writer, Dimitriadis a

*I am indebted to the late Christina Dimitriadis-Damilakos for drawing my attention to, and entrusting me with, these letters. I would also like to thank the author's sister, Mrs. Lili Alivizatos, for kind permission to publish them.

1. These letters, which henceforth will be referred to by their serial number, are in the following sequence: No. 1: 20/12/22, No. 2: 4/1/23, No. 3: 22/1/23, No. 4: 12/3/23, No. 5: Good Friday [6/4/23], No. 6: 29/4/23, No. 7: 27/6/23, No. 8: 5/7/23, No. 9: 14/10/23. Theotokas' extracts published here for the first time are in the original Greek. I have kept his spelling, correcting only the occasional oversight; any additions of my own — supplied where the manuscript is damaged or contains abbreviations that may be unclear — are shown in square brackets. All other quotations are given in an English translation which is my own unless otherwise stated.

businessman), it seems that they never lost touch altogether but made a point of meeting every so often until, that is, Dimitriadis' premature death in 1964, two years before that of Theotokas.

Dimitriadis interests us here, of course, as the recipient of the letters; but there is another, little-known connection which deserves special mention. By all accounts the fictional character of Dimis in *Leonis* was closely modelled on his personality. Dimis stands out rather among his immediate contemporaries; towards the beginning of the novel there is the following description of him: 'Short and slender as he was, with clever face and playful grey eyes, forever on the go, checking out all the corners, and contriving a thousand and two ruses, he looked a bit like one of the mice of the Lyceum'.² He comes across as a lively boy, reckless, well-informed and worldly-wise who, in many ways, opens up new horizons for his friend, Leonis. It is made clear that in the excitement of a game he could not care less about the consequences; likewise, having spotted enemy planes, he urges his friends not to go and hide but stay out and watch them in action.³ He perplexes and upsets Leonis by asserting that the Byzantine emperors Nicephoros Phocas and Ioannis Tzimiskes were Armenian and shocks him by telling him of the love-affair between Pavlos Proios and Helene Phoka.⁴ His keen interest in girls — keener than that of the other boys in the novel — is repeatedly referred to and it is he who, while still very young, puts forward the idea that one's girl comes before one's friends.⁵

If we recall Theotokas' self-confessed practice regarding the heroes of his novels we will find that there is nothing surprising or unusual about his fashioning Dimis with the personality of a childhood friend in mind. What is striking, however, is the degree to which this is done here. In 1936, Theotokas commented on the characters in *Argo*:

The truth is (I have learned this from experience) that a novelist, whether intentionally or mechanically, is always exploiting what he lives through as well as

2. G. Theotokas, *Λεωνής* (Athens 1940, 4th ed. n.d.) 44; and for the translation see: *Leonis*, tr. D.E. Martin (Minneapolis, Minnesota 1985) 32.

3. Theotokas, *Λεωνής*, 32 and 52-53, respectively.

4. *ibid.*, 44-45 and 47-48, respectively.

5. *ibid.*, 48.

what he sees and hears happening around him. Nevertheless, if one excepts the President, the three sketches of the University examiners (Part II, Ch. 3) and, to some extent, Papisideros, characters borrowed unchanged from life do not exist in my book.

He goes on to explain how his characters are inherently composite, each an amalgam of elements taken from life (a way of speaking from one person, a psychological crisis from another) but also products of his own imagination. They are, as he candidly puts it, 'unexpected mixtures born of this alchemical union of reality and imagination and of my own positive intervention that I myself do not always fully understand'.⁶ Three years later, planning a novel for which he was to draw on his life in Paris, he wrote:

Incidents of my student life re-fashioned, somewhat transposed in time, very real deep down. Petridis is called Petris, Ilias is called Loukis, Yannis and Vouvlinois are called Polychroniadis and Delivorias. All of them re-fashioned and quite humorously so (will they get angry? well, let them).

The following day he changed his mind:

The character who yesterday was called Loukis (and who resembles Ilias) will be called Petris. Petris will be called Pavlis. Through this change of names I achieve greater freedom because the characters are freed somewhat from their living prototypes (Loukis was too reminiscent of the name Liakos, Petris of the name Petridis). Let me cut the ropes. . .⁷

While naturally allowing for the rôle of fictive imagination at work in *Leonis*, the similarities in name, physical appearance and personality between Dimis and his counterpart in real life are especially close; more so, I suspect, than any such similarities to be found in the characters of *Argo*, for example. But then, in a novel which cleaves so closely to its author's early experiences this is not perhaps altogether surprising.

6. G. Theotokas, *Ημερολόγιο της «'Αργώς» και του «Δαιμονίου»*, ed. G.P. Savidis (Athens 1989) 58-59.

7. G. Theotokas, *Τετράδια 'Ημερολογίου (1939-1953)*, ed. D. Tziouvas (Athens [1987]) 58-60.

To return now to the letters, they make up almost all of the Theotokas documents dating from the momentous year following the Asia Minor Catastrophe that have been found hitherto. Known to have survived are also a few jottings (likewise unpublished) in his 1922 pocket-diary; they relate to his school-leaving examinations, his subsequent Austrian trip and, more importantly, to the Asia Minor Catastrophe.⁸ Indeed, with the exception of two entries from his journal, dated 24th and 25th of March 1921 (the centenary of the Greek War of Independence), the letters to Dimitriadis and his pocket-diary jottings are the only known private documents from this early period in his life.⁹ For in 1939, with World War II looming, Theotokas largely destroyed his previous journals and correspondence:

A sad occupation: In view of the mobilisation I am destroying today old journals and letters. I would like to make a general clearance of my manuscripts, to burn what is worthless, that is three quarters of them, but I do not have the peace of mind required for this kind of work. And the other person in me is smiling and laughing at me: Europe is at arms and you are thinking of your rubbishy papers!

(Seferis, incidentally, who heard about this wholesale destruction of journals and did not approve, attributed it to the artist's fear of leaving behind writings that could distort his image).¹⁰

Apart from the documents already referred to, what little survived this onslaught dates, at the earliest, from around the period when he published his first book, *Elefthero Pnevma*, which appeared in 1929 and became something of a manifesto for his contemporaries, the so-called 'Generation of the '30s'. There is a short text entitled 'Like ■ Journal' which Savidis dates tentatively to 1929/1931;¹¹ the journal relating to *Argo* begins in 1932 while that relating to *Daimonio* even later, in 1938. The same is true of his hitherto published corres-

8. The G. Theotokas Archive, File 47, Agenda [= pocket-diary] 1922. I am grateful to Mrs. L. Alivizatos for showing me this pocket-diary and allowing me to publish the relevant entries (see below).

9. For the two entries from his 1921 journal, see: Theotokas, *Ημερολόγιο 'Αργῶς καὶ Δαιμονίου*, 125-126.

10. See, respectively: Theotokas, *Τετρ. 'Ημερολογίου*, 70; and G. Seferis, *Μέρες, Γ'* (Athens 1977) 178.

11. Theotokas, *Ημερολόγιο 'Αργῶς καὶ Δαιμονίου*, 127-144.

pondence, the one exception being a letter sent from Paris in November 1927 to Yannis Oikonomidis, an old school-friend and fellow-student at Athens University.¹² Otherwise, an important letter addressed to his fellow-writer Stelios Xefloudas dates from the winter of 1928-1929, when he was in London; his correspondence with the poet N. Kalas begins in 1929 and with Seferis a year later.¹³

What I propose to do here with these nine letters, which have surprisingly survived, is to comment on those aspects of them that strike me as interesting. To begin with their language, he seems to have made a conscious effort to standardise his Greek. These letters, and this is true of his writings more generally, contain only occasional traces of the Constantinopolitan idiom, e.g. ζουλεύω (No. 1), νὰ σκοτωνόμαστε (No. 2), ζουπές (No. 6). Secondly, while the two journal entries of 1921 are in *katharevousa*, the letters of 1922-1923 are in demotic, attesting to the conversion which occurred during his last months at school. In the letter to Oikonomidis, already mentioned, he recalls how he had, at the time, decided to give a lecture in support of *katharevousa* but that, having done some preparation by reading a number of demoticist texts, he reached conclusions that were the opposite of those he intended to expound. His lecture became instead 'an enthusiastic manifesto in favour of demoticism'.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the demotic he uses in writing to Dimitriadis is moderate; for example, the third-declension feminine nouns ending in -ις are generally kept; in the accusative the -v is dropped but they are still spelt with an -ι;¹⁵ and the traditional spelling of the subjunctive is, of course, retained.¹⁶ Furthermore, especially when talking about matters broadly bureaucratic, he is influenced (as most Greeks were even fifty years later) by the current journalese, itself echoing the official language of the time. To quote an extreme example,

12. G. Theotokas, 'Η πτώση τῶν Θεῶν', ed. N. Alivizatos, *Τὸ Δέντρο* 10, Nos. 75-76 (Jan.-March, 1993) 7-19.

13. See, respectively: Theotokas, *Ημερολόγιο 'Αργῶς καὶ Δαιμονίου*, 19-21; G. Theotokas-N. Kalas, *Μία ἀλληλογραφία*, ed. I. Konstandoulaki-Chantzou (Athens 1989); G. Theotokas & G. Seferis, *Ἀλληλογραφία (1930-1966)*, ed. G.P. Savidis (Athens 1975).

14. Theotokas, 'Η πτώση τῶν Θεῶν', 18.

15. E.g. διεύθυνσις (No. 1), ἀνοιξις (No. 5), τὴν ἐπίδρασι (No. 7).

16. This retention, however, is not surprising: it was common practice among the demoticists of the time.

‘Νὰ σοῦ πῶ τὴν ἀλήθεια μοῦ φάνηκε ἀφελὴς ἡ ἐρώτησίς σου ἀνῆξαιροῦνται οἱ φοιτηταὶ τοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ. Ἀπαλλάσσονται, ἐννοεῖται, οἱ ξένοι ὑπήκοοι. Ἐ[π]ίσης ἐν καιρῷ εἰρήνης οἱ φοιτηταὶ ἔχουν ἀναβολὴ κατατάξεως ὥς τὸ τέλος τῶν σπουδῶν τους.’ (No. 3).

Although Theotokas became very involved in the student union Φοιτητικὴ Συντροφιά and in its aim to defend and promote the demotic, it appears from his letters that this must have happened after early 1923 because in January of that year he mentions only in passing and with some detachment the fact that Oikonomidis had become a fanatical demoticist and was having quarrels two or three times a day as a result.¹⁷ In subsequent years, following his involvement in the Φοιτητικὴ Συντροφιά, Theotokas’ demotic became, of course, purer. Yet for all his genuine admiration for Psycharis, he generally avoided the excesses of the early demoticists; this must be partly due to character and partly because he belonged to a generation distanced enough from the beginning of the demoticist movement to be aware of the shortcomings of its more extreme positions.

Theotokas was to work on perfecting his linguistic medium in a way that even Seferis envied.¹⁸ Indeed, he himself seems to rate his contribution to the development of the Greek language as more important than his contribution to literature. While writing *Leonis* under the incubus of World War II, which had just begun in Europe, he records in his journal his doubts about the validity of producing literature at such a time. His only consolation is that by so doing he works on the language which transcends both his own life and his times. ‘I may vanish completely’, he writes, ‘but the language will remain and for this language I, too, have toiled’.¹⁹ When

17. No. 2. For Theotokas’ involvement in this student union, which nearly cost him his expulsion from the University of Athens, see: L. Politis, ‘Ἡ Φοιτητικὴ Συντροφιά καὶ ἡ ἱστορία της’, *Νέα Ἑστία* 22, No. 264 (Christmas, 1937) 75-79; G. Theotokas, *Πνευματικὴ Πορεία* (Athens 1961) 201-205; L. Alivizatos, ‘Ἡ Φοιτητικὴ Συντροφιά’, 1925-1926. Μὲ βάση στοιχεῖα ἀπὸ τὸ ἀρχεῖο τοῦ Γ. Θεοτοκά, *Σύγχρονα Θέματα* 15 (Sept. 1982) 25-61; C. Lazos, ‘Ἡ «Φοιτητικὴ Συντροφιά» (1910-1929) καὶ ὁ Γεώργιος Θεοτοκάς’, *Διαβάζω* 137 (12/2/1986) 41-44.

18. See: Theotokas & Seferis, *Ἀλληλογραφία*, 93; cf. G. Seferis, *Δοκίμεις*, B’, ed. G.P. Savidis (Athens 1974) 301.

19. Theotokas, *Τετρ. Ἡμερολόγιον*, 110-112.

reading these letters we realise that, by 1922, this life-long commitment to demotic was already being exemplified in his writings.

In corresponding with his friend, he paints a picture of student life in Athens in the early 1920s:

Δοκιμάζω τὴν ἀθηναϊκὴ ζωὴ ἀπὸ ὅλες τὶς μεριές της. Συνοδεύω καμμιὰ φορὰ καμμιὰ μικρὴ μοδίστρα στὸ Ζάππειο ὅταν σκοτεινιάσει· πηγαίνω μὲ τὸν Οἰκονομίδη στὶς φιλολογικὲς συναθροίσεις ὅταν μιλεῖ ὁ Παλαμάς· μὲ τὸν Βουβλινὸ πηγαίνω στὰ ἀριστοκρατικὰ κέντρα ὅταν ὑπάρχουν δραχμές· καὶ ὅταν δὲν ὑπάρχουν π[ε]ρνῶ τὶς ὥρες μου μὲ τὸν κομμουνιστὴ Μιχαηλίδη στὰ καφενεῖα τοῦ προλεταριάτου.

Τὴν Πέμπτη θὰ γίνῃ στὸ Πανεπ[ιστήμιο] μιὰ σπουδαία τελετὴ. Ὁ Πρύτανης θὰ προσφωνήσῃ τοὺς πρωτοετείς καὶ θὰ τοὺς χαιρετήσῃ διὰ χειραψίας. Ὁ Μιχαηλίδης λέει πὼς αὐτὴ ἡ πολυτέλεια δὲν συμφωνεῖ μὲ τὰ φρονήματά του, γι’ αὐτὸ θ’ ἀρρωστήσῃ. Ὁ Β[ουβ]λινὸς ἐτοιμάζει ἀπὸ τώρα τὴν πόζα ποὺ θὰ πάρῃ. (No. 1).

In another letter we read:

Ἐδῶ ἡ Ἀποκριὰ εἶναι ἐξωφρενικὴ καὶ συμβαίνουν πράματα ποὺ δὲν τὰ ξέρουμε στὴν Πόλη. Πρέπει ὅμως νὰ ἡῆρες καὶ σὺ τὸν τρόπο νὰ διασκεδάσῃς στὸ μελαγχολικὸ Πέρα καὶ ἐλπίζω ὅτι θὰ αἰσθάνεσαι καὶ σὺ σὰν κ’ ἐμᾶς τὰ πόδια σου κουρασμένα ἀπὸ τὸ χορὸ τώρα ποὺ ἀρχίζει ἡ ἐποχὴ τῆς νηστείας καὶ προσευχῆς. (No. 4).

By the end of April, with examinations dangerously near, he acknowledges the reality of an experience common to generations of Greek students: ‘οἱ ἐξετάσεις μ’ ἔχουνε σαστισμένο. Ἔτσι τὴν παθαίνουμε ὅλοι μας. Ὅλο τὸ χρόνο τεμπελιάζουμε καὶ τὸν τελευταῖο μῆνα τὰ βρίσκουμε μπαστούνια.’ He prepares himself for the ordeal of oral examinations at the University of Athens, a trial he will later fictionalise amusingly in *Argo*:

Βλέπω τοὺς τόμους μου — 6 τόμους χοντρούς, μεγάλους — καὶ δὲν ξέρω πὼς θὰ τοὺς βάλω στὸ κεφάλι μου. Καὶ νὰ λογαριάξῃς ὅτι στὶς 25 Μαΐου θὰ καθίσω στὸ πράσινο τραπέζι ἀντίκρυ σὲ τρεῖς καθηγητὰς τῶν ὁποίων ὁ ἓνας πρύτανης τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου καὶ ὁ ἄλλος κοσμήτωρ τῆς ν[ομικῆς] σχολῆς. Προσωπικότητες. Τί θὰ τοὺς λέω; Ἰδέα δὲν ἔχω. Μὰ ὅλα αὐτὰ ἐσένα πᾶ δὲν σ’ ἐνδιαφέρουν. Εἶσαι εὐτυχὴς ἄνθρωπος: Αὐτεξούσιος, ἀνεξάρτητος, ἔμπορος, ἐπομένως παραλὴς καὶ ἐπάνω ἀπὸ ὅλα ἐρωτευμένος. Ἔχεις καιρὸ καὶ νὰ ἐρωτεύεσαι.²⁰

20. No. 6. For the reference to *Argo*, see: G. Theotokas, *Ἀργώ* II (Athens 1936, 10th ed. n.d.) 33-37.

It is hardly surprising that at a time when young men's scope for erotic fulfilment was limited, the subject of girls should occur and recur in their correspondence. Theotokas displays a keen interest in Dimitriadis' love-affairs, reports any relevant gossip about common friends that comes his way, and tells him of his own exploits: how he follows girls at Zappeio (cf. No. 1), or is attracted by two very different ones and cannot make up his mind which to choose (No. 4). It is all youthful stuff that makes one smile. Looking back on such early experiences, he acknowledges that until the age of thirty-five his understanding of women remained superficial and finds that its development thereafter is reflected in his books.²¹

When he claims, in 1923, that he will write a novel, or a series of lyrics, about Dimitriadis' love-affair in Romania (No. 7), this is, of course, said in jest; yet the joke seems to be a pointer to a tacit understanding among his friends that he will, one day, become a writer. We know, in fact, that while still at school he contributed to his school magazine; and, many years later, his old friend Yannis Oikonomidis would note that 'Theotokas was a born writer'.²² With regard to his literary interests at the time, apart from the reference to attending gatherings where Palamas was the guest-speaker, he also mentions in his letters his reading of Anatole France and Renan.²³

Here, too, we note the first seeds of the nostalgia for Constantinople and its islands that is to permeate not only *Leonis* and the three related short stories in *Evipidis Pentozalis* but also *Argo* and his journals (*Tetradia Imerologiou*). During his first winter in Greece he seems quite excited about Athens — there is even a reference to the 'melancholy Pera' (No. 4) — but already by April he has come to realise that once it became certain that he was not to return to Constantinople he suddenly discovered all its advantages. The Athenian summer resorts are, to his mind, fourteen times inferior to Princes' Island or Therapia (No. 5). He even grumbles about the weather and

21. See: A. Ziras, 'Σχόλια σ' ένα αὐτόγραφο τοῦ Γιώργου Θεοτοκά', *Ἀντί* 98 (6/5/1978) 40.

22. See, respectively: 'Βιοχρονολογία τοῦ Γιώργου Θεοτοκά', in the collective volume *Ὁδοιπορία τοῦ Γιώργου Θεοτοκά* (Athens 1986) 179; and Y. Oikonomidis, 'Θύμηση Γιώργου Θεοτοκά', *Διαβάζω* 137 (12/2/1986) 47.

23. Nos. 1, 8, and 9, respectively.

the habit of Athenian women of going about too lightly dressed (No. 7). Leros, by contrast, he likes: it reminds him of the Princes' Islands (No. 8).

Apart from Leros, in the summer of 1923, Theotokas also visited his ancestral Chios. His love for the Aegean islands began then; it remained constant and gave rise to some good passages scattered among his writings as well as an early text which the young Elytis for one found inspiring:

Again and again I read the text about the Aegean. It was the first time I saw somebody attempting fully to grasp a more general spirit relating to the maritime physiognomy of Greece; a spirit which — nurtured by my only genuinely personal experience — I felt was overwhelming me and with a thousand interchanging possibilities was demanding expression in the language of contemporary sensibility, in the new poetic idiom.²⁴

Politics, another life-long interest, is referred to more than once. We find him critical of the hero-worship by his fellow-Constantinopolitans of Venizelos and claiming that the fate of a nation cannot depend forever on one person alone; that when this person gets old it is time to look for new ones (No. 4). It represents what must have been a very radical position among Venizelists at the time; and coming as it does from a boy who has not even reached the age of eighteen it shows impressive independence and maturity of political thought.

What is clearly puzzling — and I have left it till last because, in many ways, it is the most interesting feature of these letters — is the complete absence of any reference to the Asia Minor Catastrophe. And yet both boys were affected by it not only on a national but also on a very personal level. For Dimitriadis it meant the loss of his brother, Christos. Like Pavlos Proios in *Leonis*, Christos Dimitriadis had gone to the front as a volunteer; on the 27th of March 1921, aged 19, he was killed in action plunging his home into deep mourning. For Theotokas, on the other hand, it meant that any return to Constantinople was ruled out. Unlike Dimitriadis, he had Turkish

24. O. Elytis, *Ἀνοιχτά χαρτιά*, 2nd ed. (Athens 1982) 261-262. The text Elytis refers to is clearly 'Ἐπιστολὴ σὲ μιὰ φίλῃ ἐπαρχιώτισσα', in G. Theotokas, *Ὁρμαὶ Ἀργυλαί* (Athens 1931) 45-64.

citizenship and in those turbulent days this entailed conscription in the Turkish army. Moreover, owing to his father's involvement in national issues, the family had to leave Constantinople within a few weeks of the Turkish victory. A prominent lawyer and legal advisor to the Ecumenical Patriarch, Michael Theotokas had always played an active rôle in safeguarding and promoting Greek interests. During the period 1918-1922, he was a member of various national and international committees concerned with the problems faced by the Greek, and more generally the Christian, population in Turkey. He also wrote on these matters, was in close touch with foreign journalists and was, himself, the editor of the French-language newspaper *Spectateur d'Orient*. The political climate in Turkey having changed with the Greek defeat, his activities were no longer to be tolerated by the Turkish authorities. Friends from the British Embassy warned him of his imminent arrest and advised him to leave the country immediately taking his family with him. They left Constantinople in haste on the 10/23 of September, arriving at Athens two days later. Soon after that, at Venizelos' request, M. Theotokas acted as legal advisor to the Greek Committee at the Conference of Lausanne (1922-1923).²⁵ For these reasons there could, of course, be no return to Constantinople for the Theotokas family.

George Theotokas was in Trieste on his return journey from Austria to Constantinople when the news of the Asia Minor Catastrophe reached him. Both at Athens, where he stopped for some days, and in Constantinople after his return, he jotted in his pocket-diary a few words recording his impressions:

Trieste, 18/31 August: 'Πρώτες ειδήσεις της καταστροφής'.

Athens, 22 August/4 September: 'Αθήνα νικημένη'.

Athens, 24 August/6 September: 'Στρατιώτες ντροπιασμένοι, πρόσφυγες, παντού'.

Athens, 25 August/7 September: 'φαίνεται ή καταστροφή! Στην ατμόσφαιρα κάτι σαν κουφόβρασι'.

Constantinople, 2/15 September: 'Η Πόλη άλλαξε όλη. Παντού

25. See: L. Alivizatos, *Μνήμη Μιχαήλ Γ. Θεοτοκά (1872-1951)* (Athens 1993) particularly, 16, 30-35, 39-42.

κυριαρχεί τὸ κόκκινο. 'Η Τουρκία πανηγυρίζει'.²⁶

Time and time again, in his later writings, he will return to the experience of the Asia Minor Catastrophe and its tragic aftermath, discussing its lasting consequences and evoking the atmosphere of the period in fiction. There can be no denying the impact it had on him. Yet, in these letters to an old friend there is not a word — as if the refugees, a daily reminder of what had happened, did not exist. The explanation I find more convincing is that by the winter of 1922 and for the whole of 1923, at least, the subject was too painful to touch. This attitude can be paralleled with yet another incident from *Leonis*. In the autumn of 1922, in the wake of the disaster, the hero meets in Athens Stasinos, a friend a little older than himself, who is just back from the front. He looks dishevelled, dirty and distinctly unwell. Almost the first thing he says is to plead that they should not talk about the war.²⁷

Not unrelated to the trauma of the Asia Minor Catastrophe, moreover, must also be the 'philosophy' — an interesting combination of nihilism and a positive outlook on life — that Theotokas expounds in the last of these nine letters to Sophoclis Dimitriadis:

'Εγὼ ἄρχισα νὰ βλέπω τὴ ζωὴ μ' ἄλλο μάτι. Ἡδὴ πὼς ὅλα εἶναι ἀστεῖα, καὶ ὁ παρᾶς, καὶ ἡ ἐκτίμησις τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ οἱ ἰδεολογίες, καὶ τὰ μεγάλα ὄνειρα.²⁸ Τὸ μόνο πρᾶγμα ποὺ ἀξίζει κάτι εἶναι ἡ χαρὰ — ὅπου ὁ καθεὶς τὴ βρίσκει. "Ὅποιος μπορεῖ καὶ χαίρεται ἐκτελεῖ τὸν προορισμὸ τοῦ ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ὑπὸ τὸν ὄρο νὰ κρατᾷ στὴ χαρὰ τοῦ κάποιος ἡθικὴς βάσεις. Εἶναι μοῦ φαίνεται οἱ θεωρίες τοῦ παλιοῦ Ἐπικούρου καὶ ἄρχισα νὰ τίς ἀσπάζωμαι ἀπὸ τὴ μέρα ποὺ συνάντησα στὸ κεφάλι μου 2-3 ἀθεόφοβες ἄσπρες τρίχες. Γεράσαμε, βρέ Σοφοκλῆ. Πῆρες εἶδησι; Κοίτα μονάχα μὴ χάνης τὸν καιρὸ σου. "Ὅταν θὰ γίνης παπποὺς πρέπει νὰ ἔχης τὴν παρηγοριά ὅτι τὰ νιάτα σου τὰ χάρηκες. (No. 9).

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26. See: The G. Theotokas Archive, File 47, Agenda 1922. The two dates given correspond, respectively, to the Julian and the Gregorian calendar, the latter having been introduced in Greece in 1922.

27. Theotokas, *Λεωνίς*, 168.

28. Here, again, note how these sentiments get recontextualised in *Leonis*, when the hero talks with Stasinos ('I don't know. From time to time I feel like the snake that sloughs off its old skin. It's just that my new skin has not taken shape yet and everything shakes me up and bothers me. And I'm not sure it will ever take proper shape.' That's funny. 'Everything is funny.' 'Yea, sure. . . ' Stasinos became withdrawn for a few moments, then continued: 'And the funniest of all are the ideologies and struggles.'), see: *ibid.*, 169-171; and for the translation, *Leonis*, tr. D.E. Martin, 137; the italics are mine.

Fugitives and ethnography in Priscus of Panium¹

MICHAEL MAAS

Because the historical writings of Priscus of Panium survive only in fragments, we regrettably lack knowledge of the full complexity of this fifth century historian's concerns. Widely cited in Byzantine sources, the greatest part of Priscus' work is found in the *Excerpta de Legationibus*, which was compiled from ancient texts by the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos in the middle of the tenth century as part of an encyclopedic collation of educational and practical information.² The *Excerpta*, which dealt with international relations, found much of interest in Priscus, whose history included a detailed account of the struggle between the Romans and Attila the Hun.³ Of particular value is Priscus' first-hand account of an embassy to Attila in 449 to discuss the exchange of fugitives and other matters.⁴ On

1. A version of this paper was read at the Twenty-Second Annual Conference for the Promotion of Classical Studies in Israel, Tel-Aviv University, June 3, 1993. I wish to thank Benjamin Isaac for his kind invitation to participate in the conference, and Jonathan Elukin, Joel Golb, Kenneth Holm, Sally McKee, Susan Melnick, David Nirenberg, Jonathan Shepard, Giusto Traina, and the anonymous readers for *BMGS* for their helpful comments. This paper was written under ideal conditions at the Institute for Advanced Studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and I thank its Director, David Shulman, and his staff for their hospitality.

2. *Excerpta de Legationibus*, ed. C. de Boor (Berlin 1903) 121-155, 575-591. For this paper I have used (with a few changes) the edition and translation of Priscus made by R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicizing Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus. II. Text, Translation, and Historiographical Notes*. (Liverpool 1983) 222-400. Because Blockley numbers the fragments differently than de Boor, in the notes below I supply references to the de Boor edition after references to Blockley. On the sources of the fragments, see Barry Baldwin, 'Priscus of Panium', *B 30* (1980) 16-51, here 29.

3. Evagrius, *HE* 1.17. See also *Suda* II 2301; R.C. Blockley, 'Priscus of Panium', 60, in *The Fragmentary Classicizing Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, vol I (Liverpool 1981) 48-70; *idem*, *East Roman Foreign Policy. Formation and Conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius* (Leeds 1992) 62-67 for historical background.

4. Blockley, *frg.* 11.2, p.242-280/de Boor *frg.* 3 and 5. Priscus claims that Maximinus was unaware of the embassy's secret purpose to arrange Attila's assassination.

this journey Priscus served as an assistant to Maximinus, the leader of the diplomatic mission sent from Constantinople.⁵ Envoys to foreign lands regularly included in their reports detailed observations of the societies they visited,⁶ and in this tradition the fragments preserved in the *Excerpta* constitute an invaluable source of information about Hunnic life as well as diplomatic matters. Priscus later reworked his acute observations of the Huns made on the embassy and mixed them with other information in the larger framework of his historical treatise, adapting part of his diplomatic intelligence report to the needs of a different sort of literary enterprise. We cannot know with any certainty the thematic architectonics of this historical work, but its fragments make it clear that Priscus' treatment of the relations between Rome and the Empire of the Huns and his development of cultural issues implicit in those relations were more subtle than the tenth century editors' focus on diplomatics might suggest.

Priscus' account must be seen against the general background of Roman diplomacy with the Huns. Negotiations had long been a basic part of Constantinople's relations with them,⁷ and the politics of ethnic identity in a crude but practical way were at the heart of that diplomacy. A great bone of contention between the empires was the return of fugitives from Hunnic lands. Even in the time of Attila's predecessor Rua, the Huns had exchanged embassies with the Romans to demand repatriation of fugitives.⁸ Because the Romans required the most severe compulsion to return people who had run from the land of the Huns, and because the Huns were relentless in pursuit of them, the issue remained alive. Attila even kept a list of run-aways.⁹ Who were the fugitives? Attila's empire consisted of many subjugated and restive nations which in fact rebelled when he

5. *Ibid.*

6. A.D. Lee, *Information and Frontiers. Roman foreign relations in late antiquity* (Cambridge 1993) 168.

7. For a general overview, see Evangelos Chrysos, 'Byzantine diplomacy, A.D. 300-800: means and ends', in *Byzantine Diplomacy. Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March, 1990*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (London 1992) 25-39, esp. 33ff; Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 151-163.

8. Blockley, *frg.* 2, p.224/de Boor *frg.* 1.

9. Blockley, *frg.* 11. 189, p.256/de Boor, *frg.* 3.

died, and among the Hun aristocracy there were political rivals who sought safety abroad.¹⁰ At the heart of practical diplomacy with the Huns lay the question of Hunnic rights over people who had fled their domain, and this, I believe, caused Priscus to consider the place of coercion and choice in determining identity and allegiance. To what extent might identity be chosen and what are the constraints upon such choices? What factors determine loyalty to a leader or state? These questions are important in Priscus' description of the Huns and their subjects, as this paper will show.

Priscus' portrait of the Huns and their master Attila provides a hint of his broader interest in cultural boundaries, to which the tenth century editors were quite indifferent and which has gone unnoticed in modern studies. Most scholars have considered Priscus' account chiefly as diplomatic reporting or as straightforward and unproblematical ethnographic description¹¹ (as though such a thing were possible), without sufficiently considering how artfully contrived is his retelling of events or stopping to consider how he pursued questions beyond his adventures on the trip to Attila. It is true that Priscus did not present the Huns as monsters, as did Ammianus Marcellinus in his famous excursus,¹² and while his Huns remain anti-types of civilisation (thus conforming to traditional antitheses in description of steppe nomads¹³) they are never cartoons. Priscus describes them as sophisticated antagonists capable of high diplomacy and complicated interaction with their subjects. Perhaps more importantly, they are individuals with a fully human range of emotions and problems. Since their humanity was not at issue, their attitudes could be contrasted more subtly with Roman ones, and issues of cultural allegiance and identity appropriately posed.

In his record of the embassy to Attila Priscus includes three

10. Blockley frg. 2.40, p. 226/de Boor, frg. 1; Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy* 65-66.

11. e.g. Gyula Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica, I: Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvolker* (Berlin 1954/Leiden 1983) 60-65; Blockley 1981 and 1983 for more recent bibliography.

12. Ammianus Marcellinus, XXXI.2; John Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (Baltimore 1989) 332-342.

13. Gilbert Dagron, 'Ceux d'en face. Les peuples étrangers dans les traités militaires byzantins', *TM* 10 (1987) 207-232, here 213ff.; Will Richter, 'Die Darstellung der Hunnen bei Ammianus Marcellinus (31.2.1-11)', *Historia* 23 (1974) 343-377.

episodes that develop the theme of cultural allegiance from slightly different angles. Each story is carefully centred on an encounter with a person met or observed at Attila's court, and in each a question is pointedly asked about cultural identification, for each character has either fled or refused to flee his native culture, or experienced slavery in some form. In these brief anecdotes Priscus explores differences between Roman and Hunnic society in a fashion that recalls Herodotus through his interweaving of historical, ethnographic, and moral themes.¹⁴ Priscus tells his stories with dramatic effect, couching them in terms of loyalty, escape, and treason, and they also contribute to his vivid portrait of Attila. The purpose of this paper is to show how these three episodes are related thematically. They illustrate Priscus' sophistication as a historian in developing issues implicit in ethnographic description when cultural flight is considered.

I. The expatriate merchant

In the first of these episodes Priscus encounters a Scythian (the generic term for a nomad of the steppe), whose physical appearance causes him some surprise.¹⁵

As I was waiting and walking about before the circuit wall of the palace [sc. of Attila], someone, whom I took to be a barbarian from his Scythian dress, approached me and greeted me in Greek, saying Χαῖρε, 'Hello'. I was amazed that a Scythian was speaking Greek. Since they are mongrels, in addition to their own language they study Hunnic, Gothic or indeed Latin in the case of those who have dealings with the Romans. But none of the Scythians can easily speak Greek, except for those whom they have taken prisoner from the seacoasts of Thrace and Illyria; and whoever met them could easily recognise them from their tattered clothes and filthy hair as persons who had fallen into adversity. This one, however, was like a well-cared-for Scythian with good clothing and his hair clipped

14. Robert Benedicty, 'Die historische Authentizität eines Berichtes des Priskos', *JÖBG* 13 (1964) 1-8; Moravcsik, 482; Blockley (1981) 54-55; Giusto Traina, 'De Synésios a Priscus: aperçus sur la connaissance de la 'barbarie' hunnique (fin du IVE-milieu du Ve siècle), 285-290, in: *L'armée romaine et les barbares du IIIe au VIIe siècle* (Paris 1993) 287-8 on Priscus' numerous citations of Herodotus.

15. Now based on the Hungarian plain, the Huns are still seen as steppe nomads by the Romans: Baldwin, 40ff; Blockley (1981) 56-67; on the use of the word to describe steppe peoples as well as others, see Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (Berkeley 1988) 44; Traina, 'De Synésios a Priscus', 285; Andrea Giardina, 'L'uomo romano', in: *L'uomo romano*, ed. A. Giardina (Rome 1989) v-xix, see xii-xv.

all around. *I returned his greeting and asked who he was and whence he came to the land of the barbarians to adopt a Scythian way of life.* In reply he asked why I was so eager to know this. I said that his Greek speech was the reason for my curiosity. He laughed and said that he was a Greek by origin. . .¹⁶

Then, after recounting a series of adventures that have taken him from life as a merchant on the Danube to slavery and eventual freedom among the Scythians, the man ventures to say that his new life north of the border in the household of Onegesius, a Hun noble and advisor of Attila, is far better than the one he led within the boundaries of Rome. Priscus here deliberately establishes a contrast between two kinds of life.¹⁷ The merchant explains that in peace time the people of the steppe have an easy existence, minding their own business without government interference. The Romans, he argues, deprived of the chance to defend themselves from unscrupulous rulers, are forced to depend for protection on incompetent generals and so are easily overcome in war. Peacetime is even worse for the Romans, since they are taxed unfairly and receive uneven justice: the poor are punished while the rich can buy their freedom. This is an energetic condemnation of Roman society especially loved by historians who wish to see Priscus as a critic of the Roman class system.¹⁸

Priscus answers with a defense of Rome's superiority, which is based on the Platonic ideal of the state.¹⁹ Rome's founding fathers were wise and good in their creation of a social system in which lawyers, soldiers, and farmers each make a special contribution. The helpless are defended at law, and appeals cases are heard. Lengthy court trials are not an abuse but a result of concern for justice and procedure. Romans treat their slaves better and provide many ways to gain freedom. At the end of this vigorous rebuttal Priscus tells us that:

My acquaintance wept and said that the laws were fair and the Roman polity was good, but that the authorities were ruining it by not taking the same thought for it as those of old.

16. Blockley frg. 11.2.407-423/de Boor frg. 3 and 5.

17. Blockley (1981) 56.

18. For example, E.A. Thompson, *A History of Attila and the Huns* (Oxford 1948) 185.

19. Blockley, 'Priscus of Panium', 56-57 for this literary dimension.

A convenient interruption allows Priscus to break off the conversation to return to negotiations before answering this final criticism of the former merchant. He offers no counter to the charges of current decline within the Roman government.

Several points may be made about this highly rhetorical exchange. Although Robert Benedicty has shown there to be kernels of truth in most of Priscus' descriptions, even those which derive from another source,²⁰ the tale of the merchant should be understood essentially as a fiction and not verbatim reporting. Priscus the accomplished rhetor has either invented him entirely or developed an accidental encounter in order to make a more general statement.²¹

When Priscus contrasts the officious weight of the late Roman bureaucracy with barbarian peacefulness, he is manipulating a traditional opposition of Roman and barbarian. With apt details he recasts in fifth century terms the old and conventional contrast between the idyllic life of remote peoples and corrupt civilization.²² To what end does Priscus pursue this?

The format of a debate required two opposing voices. On the one side Priscus turned himself into a literary character, taking up the defence of the Roman Empire and so creating the illusion of a passionate and very real conversation. Through the character of the merchant Priscus invents a picture of Roman society as seen through the eyes of someone who has benefited from abandoning it. Recognising the literary origins of the figure of the merchant eliminates some of the pressure of trying to breathe too much life into him: a Scythian commenting on Mediterranean society was a topos as old as Herodotus and one which Priscus' readers would have recognised. Priscus' merchant is a variation on the figure of Anacharsis the

20. Benedicty, op. cit.

21. On literary precedents: Blockley (1981) 55-59; Baldwin, 40-41; on the 'authenticity' of the merchant: Blockley (1981) 56-67; Thompson, 184; Traina, 287-289, for important remarks on literary aspects in general, and particularly on Priscus' treatment of crossing the frontier as a sort of initiation; on Priscus' variation on old themes, Giardina, 'L'uomo romano', xii-xv.

22. James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought. Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton, 1992) 45-67; Baldwin, 43.

Scythian, a legendary sage and critic of society known as one of the seven wise men.²³ Coming from the world of the steppe in which the conventional arts of Mediterranean civilisation were not practiced, and where a life of simple ease was the norm when not at war, Anacharsis represented a fully alien way of life to classical readers. His wise criticisms of society were 'distorting mirrors' that stood conventional notions of civilisation on their head.²⁴ In Priscus's treatment this is precisely what the merchant's grievances attempt to do, by suggesting that greater freedom may be found in the Hunnic realm than in Rome, where good government is no longer practiced as it had been by Romans in the past. The ex-merchant sees Rome only in terms of inefficient bureaucracy and the interference of the state.²⁵ This contradicts the assumption that living under Roman law ensured freedom.

R.C. Blockley has rightly noted, however, that Priscus' reply does not address the former merchant's criticisms very closely. He explains that on the contrary '... by shifting the discussion from the level of practical problems which the Greek [merchant] raises to that of constitutional theory, and by ignoring or passing off his most telling parts, Priscus has ensured that the two sets of arguments rarely find common ground ...'.²⁶ Blockley has suggested nevertheless that the speeches are 'really complementary', for Priscus' defence of the Roman system has one purpose, 'to stress the primacy and value of Roman law, which was generally regarded as the major differentiating factor between the "civilised" Roman and "uncivilised" barbarian.'²⁷ This emphasis on Roman law as the agent and sign of civilisation marks Priscus' place in a long tradition. Since at least

23. Jan Kindstrand, *Anacharsis: The Legend and the Apothegmata* (Studia Graeca Upsaliensia 16, Uppsala 1981) esp. 17-67; as one of the wise men: Diogenes Laertius 1.40 ff.

24. James Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 76.

25. On attitudes toward steppe nomads: Brent Shaw, 'Eaters of Flesh, Drinkers of Milk': the ancient Mediterranean ideology of the pastoral nomad', *Ancient Society* 13/14 (1982/83) 5-31; T.E.J. Weidemann, 'Between men and beasts: barbarians in Ammianus Marcellinus', in *Past Perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge 1986) 189-201.

26. Blockley (1981) 57.

27. Blockley (1981) 58.

the time of Augustus, Romans had believed that living under their law might transform foreigners into Romans and so guarantee freedom. This faith in cultural transformation under the aegis of law was basic to their ideology of empire and was played out in the reality of conquest, government, and Romanisation. Priscus' carefully constructed dialogue describes cultural difference through the particular lens of this imperial rhetoric.

When Priscus contrasts the officious weight of the late Roman bureaucracy with barbarian peacefulness, he recasts in fifth century terms another old and conventional trope, the opposition of the idyllic life of remote peoples and corrupt civilisation.²⁸ The debate thus relies on literary descriptive devices that are quite venerable, but the accompanying details are timely and informative.

Initially, on the level of simple description, the former merchant does not fit any exact categories. He is at once a Greek, a Roman and a Scythian, that is both civilised and barbarian. He stands between cultural worlds in ways that Priscus considers confusing. Initially his clothing labels him clearly as a Hun, but his speech then leads to confusion and misleads Priscus, who admits with some humour to his difficulty in recognising the man's identity because of it. Priscus is particularly attuned to problems of speech and translation throughout the fragment,²⁹ and his comments about the confusion of languages afloat in the world of the steppe demonstrate his concern about language as an attribute of identity. Like language, clothing also may deceive: the merchant's dress does not establish his social rank and distinctiveness to Priscus' eye. It is worth pointing out that for all his perceptiveness about the indicators of culture, Priscus' own categories are somewhat varied. He distinguishes peoples by dress, by *ἔθνος* (the Greek speaking Roman merchant), by language (Huns, Goths), by political region (calling Latin the language of the Ausonians — the people of the western empire), and also, by political allegiance. That none of these seems to have priority in his eyes illustrates the

28. James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, 45-67.

29. e.g.: Blockley frg. 11.144, p.252/ de Boor, frg.5; Blockley frg. 13.3, p.288/ de Boor frg.3; Lee, *Information and Frontiers* 66-67 for discussion of interpreters in imperial service on the northern frontier.

range of categories available to him in Constantinople in the middle of the fifth century as the Byzantine state began to take a definite form.

Priscus' defence of Roman institutions leaves an important question unanswered that is quite interesting in the international milieu of the mid-fifth century: How absolute is the distinction between the two cultural realms? What does it mean to take up a barbarian way of life? Roman notions of loyalty and dependence appear to be readily transferable to life in the land of the Huns. Whether or not his success story is a fluke, the ex-merchant now lives comfortably within the Hunnic system, his new life suggesting that existence among the Huns was not impossible and that their world was not utterly incomprehensible. He believes himself freer beyond the reach of Rome. Real difference between Priscus' two cultural worlds here rests primarily in the character of government, not an ill-defined ethnicity. He also suggests that there are social bonds which may transcend political boundaries, and that things other than government may determine cultural allegiance.

The debate occurs in the midst of a description of an embassy for several reasons. In literary and historical terms the embassy is the logical place to introduce the encounter. Furthermore, while neither a criticism nor a defence of Rome helps explain the negotiations themselves, taken as a step in the presentation of the three episodes, the debate makes considerable sense. This conversation with the merchant directly sets the stage for the meeting with the incorruptible Onegesius, the episode that occurs next.

II. Onegesius' Choice

If in the debate with the merchant Priscus presents a view of civilisation couched in the language of Roman political order, in the account of the negotiations with Onegesius, one of Attila's foremost chieftains, the focus shifts to personal allegiance. Following the account of a Roman who rejects Roman society by preferring to become a barbarian, Priscus now offers his readers the noteworthy prospect of a quite rational barbarian who also disdains Roman civilisation, preferring to remain a barbarian. With a reasonable argument Onegesius rejects a Roman offer to bribe him:

When Maximinus replied that if [Onegesius] crossed over to Roman territory, he would earn the emperor's gratitude and he would settle the disputes by investigating the causes and removing them in accordance with the terms of the peace, Onegesius said that he would simply tell the Emperor and his officials what Attila wished. '*Or do the Romans think,*' he retorted, '*that they will bring so much persuasion to bear on me that I shall betray my master, turn my back upon my upbringing amongst the Scythians, my wives and my children and think that slavery to Attila is not preferable to wealth among the Romans?*' He concluded that it would be better for him to remain in his own country and to calm his master's rage on those matters over which he was angry at the Romans rather than to go to them and incur the charge that he had acted other than seemed best to Attila. . . .³⁰

Priscus' mission indeed may have tried to bribe Onegesius, and he may well have refused their offer, but his words are Priscus' creation, and we see the author's contrivance. Once again he builds on two venerable literary themes, the contrast between slavery and wealth and the foreigner who refuses to abandon his master³¹ to make several points about the relative significance of freedom and allegiance. Priscus poses the question about cultural identity in this passage as matter of betrayal.

In one way Onegesius and the merchant are diametrically opposed, for the Hunnic chieftain refuses to do precisely what his servant has done — to turn his back on his people. They are also much the same, however, in their preference of a 'barbarian' life in which, despite a nominal slavery, both enjoy greater freedom than the wealth of Rome can provide.

Priscus is questioning what it means to be a slave under Attila, just as freedom under the Romans was examined before. What the merchant has criticised about life in the Roman empire, Onegesius accepts in the land of the Hun. He admits that under Attila he is not entirely free, but the nature of this lack of freedom is not clear cut. His condition need not be understood as abject submission, for although the word δουλεία that Priscus uses to describe Onegesius' relationship to Attila has the primary meaning of slavery as ownership

30. Blockley frg. 11.2.530 ff., p. 274/ de Boor, frg. 3.

31. See Homer, *Odyssey* 11.488-491 for the contrast of slavery and wealth, and Xenophon, *Hellenica* 4.1.32-38 for the loyal foreigner.

by another person, it also could be used to denote a different sort of social relationship, that of personal and political dependence³² — in this case quite sensibly motivated by fear, considering Attila's relentless pursuit of renegades. Onegesius' acceptance of this dependence, which, incidentally, is never compared to political realities within the Roman state, indicates a definite rejection of the idealised benefits of the freedom to be found under Roman law that Priscus sketched earlier. At the same time Priscus undermines the merchant's comments about the freedom of his life in the land of the Huns, for he is surely aware that Onegesius' loyalty to Attila is no different in kind than the former merchant's loyalty to Onegesius. The relativity of perceptions of freedom is thus emphasised through a simple paradox. The expatriate lives as a Hun because he finds freedom by leaving Rome. Onegesius, on the other hand, remains un-Roman because he perversely prefers the arbitrary will of Attila to a Roman definition of freedom. In this way, Onegesius' loyalty, though sympathetically portrayed, remains barbaric. His choice to remain loyal to a tyrannical master places him beyond the bounds of civilisation.

Priscus lets us see, by the Roman concepts and words he puts in Onegesius' mouth, that he considers the problem of allegiance a complicated ethical matter. He has some genuine sympathy for the dilemma that confronts Onegesius in the prospect of turning traitor, and he suggests the real psychological tensions latent in cultural betrayal and assimilation. Onegesius gains a certain nobility by accepting his subservience to Attila without compulsion and by rejecting the prospects of great wealth dangled before him by Rome's ambassadors. With considerable irony he reminds the Romans of the virtues of loyalty. It is loyalty to his family, ruler, and society — not an arbitrary external attribute such as language, social status, or his Hunnic origin itself — that determines Onegesius' identity and his reply to the Romans.

32. J. Harmatta, 'The Dissolution of the Hun Empire', *Acta Archaeologica* 2 (1952) 277-305, here 303 for a discussion of the word in Priscus. Harmatta notes two inscriptions from the reign of Justinian (*SIG* 3, no. 910 A-B) that use *δοῦλος/δουλεία* to describe the relation of a high ranking court official to the emperor.

We see that Priscus treats Onegesius and his culture as something with value and so worth considering seriously, and by finding some merit in Onegesius' choice he opens the door to the possibility of a genuine comparison of the two cultures. Though in the end Onegesius remains a barbarian, this conclusion emerges from an attempt to judge his choices. Whether or not this is a true presentation of the Hun's motivations, Priscus' account mirrors his own effort to look at an alien culture sympathetically, and this gesture on his part is a revealing hint of the state of political ethnography at mid-century.

III. The sad court jester

Priscus plays further with the issue of choosing between Roman civilisation and barbarism in a third anecdote about Zercon, the Huns' court jester who entertains the guests at a banquet given by Attila which Priscus has attended. Zercon is a good foil for Onegesius and the expatriate merchant because he demonstrates the inverse case to theirs. When we met the former merchant, he appeared to be Hunnic and so was different from what he originally was, while Onegesius had the opportunity to make choices about the form of liberty he might enjoy in his life. Unlike these men, however, Zercon cannot manipulate his identity in any way. He has no options. As we will see, Romans and Huns laugh at Zercon because his colour and his deformity set him apart, and because his spoken words are a mix of languages. Neither Goth nor Roman nor Hun, he jumbles all the boundaries,³³ and he becomes a figure of fun.

Priscus tells his readers some of the jester's misfortunes. Zercon, a Moorish dwarf, had been brought to the land of the Huns against his will during the joint reign of Attila and his brother Bleda. He had failed in an attempt to escape captivity and was caught and dragged back to his master. Unlike the merchant of the first anecdote, Zercon cannot be accepted by Hunnic society, and unlike Onegesius, there is nothing voluntary about his servitude. Zercon's appearance, status, origin, and his manner of speech keep him an outsider. In Priscus' words:

33. see below, n. 35.

When Zercon was recaptured and brought back in chains, *Bleda at the sight of him, burst into laughter, abated his anger and asked the reason for his flight and why he thought life amongst the Romans was better than amongst themselves.* He answered that his flight had been a crime, but he had a reason for the crime, namely that he had not been given a wife. Bleda laughed even more and gave him a wife from one of the well-born attendants upon the queen, who was no longer in her service because of some misdemeanor.³⁴

This repeats the question presented so seriously in the stories of the merchant and Onegesius, of whether Hunnic life is better than Roman, but here Priscus treats the matter rather lightly. The pathos of the little man's wish makes the great Hun king laugh. The jester's decision to flee his master — a crime, of course, in Hunnic eyes — was determined, he claims, only by his simple desire for a wife, an ingenious though perhaps not entirely credible excuse for his escape from slavery.

Zercon's difficulties did not end when Bleda granted his wish. Attila, after killing Bleda and gaining sole rule of the Huns, had sent Zercon away, perhaps because he could not bear the sight of him, as a gift to Aetius, the generalissimo of the western empire. Zercon, however, was dogged in his search for matrimony and he returned to the camp of Attila at the time when Priscus was visiting. The tragicomedy continues:

Edeco (sc. a Hun ambassador to the West Roman court) had persuaded him [Zercon] to come to Attila in order to recover his wife, whom he had been given in the country of the barbarians as a result of his great favour with Bleda, but whom he had left behind in Scythia when Attila had sent him as a gift to Aetius. But he was disappointed in his hopes, since Attila was angry that he had returned to his country. Now, during the banquet, he came forward and by his appearance, his clothing, his voice, and the words which he spoke all jumbled together (for he mixed Latin, Hunnic, and Gothic) he put all in a good humour and caused all to burst into uncontrollable laughter except Attila. He remained unmoved, with no change of expression and neither said nor did anything that hinted at laughter, except when his youngest son, whose name was Ernach, came up and stood by him.³⁵

Here we see Zercon's predicament brought out in an amusing light

34. Blockley, frg.13.2, p.286 = *Suda* Z 29.

35. Blockley, frg.13.3, p.288/ de Boor, frg.3.

by Priscus. Attila is furious at the jester not for having escaped his clutches like some political enemy, but for having returned to his domain at all. This is the antithesis of the refugee problem, played rather broadly by Priscus.

The insignificant Zercon emerges as the perfect contrast to Attila, for the dwarf has absolutely no power, while all Rome fears the cruel Hun king. The jester's social identity is no more than a joke while the menace of Attila is all too real. Unlike his guests who laugh uproariously at the jester, Attila does not even smile. With this last contrast, Priscus once again sets Attila apart from the other Huns. As the complexity of Attila's character replaces the plight of the court jester,³⁶ it is possible to suggest another literary end in the description of Zercon. Priscus has built from the ex-merchant to Onegesius to Zercon to Attila, and the reader is left to consider Attila's enigmatic character, which presumably was of considerable importance in the *History* as a whole.

In the course of this build-up of carefully developed characters Priscus has played with the idea of being a fugitive, a subject appropriate to the purpose of his diplomatic mission, to explore some questions of cultural difference. The merchant, who has learned to live happily with the barbarians, has rejected the oppression of the Roman political system. He is a successful fugitive because the matters that he finds important, a degree of freedom and prosperity, can be obtained more easily in the barbarian world than in Rome. Though Priscus rebuts many of the charges made against Rome, he lets us see the logic of the expatriate's complaints and fails to call him a traitor. In the case of Onegesius, loyalty to his ruler and people cannot be transferred. The Hunnic chieftain chooses not to become a fugitive.

36. Priscus takes some pains to distinguish Attila from his subjects in small ways, and he remains a somewhat enigmatic figure. He describes Attila's great restraint as well as his drunken death (Blockley frg.24, p.317 = Jordanes, *Getica* 49.254-255); Attila alone of the Huns does not find Zercon's deformity amusing; he is exceptional among the Huns for the simplicity of his manner and dress. Priscus emphasises the Hun king's severity, then contrasts it with his love for his son (Blockley frg.13.3, p.288 = De Boor, frg.3). Attila refuses to accept the Roman depiction of nomads like himself. He destroys paintings in Milan that show Scythians being trampled by Roman cavalry (Blockley 22.3 = *Suda* M405).

For him, loyalty transcends complete freedom. Roman 'freedom' and Hunnic 'slavery' are contrasted, and Onegesius' rejection of Roman blandishments is cast in a positive, even laudable, light. With poor Zercon considerations about political systems have nothing to do with why he prefers Rome to the land of the Huns. He is described not so much barbaric as primitive; because he is a slave and a figure of ridicule in both cultures, the condition of his life is so debased that the choices of the merchant and Onegesius are meaningless to him. His status and appearance determine his choices more strictly than any political frontier; escape in any real sense is impossible for him.

These anecdotes reveal that Priscus' understanding of cultural identity was far from simple. He operated within an old framework, a dialectic between civilisation and barbarism at the heart of imperial rule. He accepted this basic binarism but at the same time indicated its problematical nature. What are the costs of inclusion in a 'civilised' realm? What can a fugitive lose or win? What boundaries can be crossed before identity is changed? In what areas is choice even possible? In his exploration of these issues, Priscus anticipates a Byzantine cosmopolitanism that would acknowledge — eventually from a Christian perspective — cultural difference and inclusion within the Byzantine system in new ways.³⁷ The brief episodes of the renegade merchant, Onegesius, and Zercon illustrate how Priscus built upon his experiences on the embassy in the composition of his history, and they hint at the richness of what has been lost.

Rice University

37. See, for example, Garth Fowden, *From Empire to Commonwealth* (Princeton 1993).

AIMA: the blood of the Grand Komnenoi¹

RUSTAM SHUKUROV

The emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143-80) asked a certain fortune teller, how long the dynasty of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) would reign. The prophetic response was the word αἷμα (blood), the first three letters designating the first initials of the Komnenian emperors in the order of succession, namely, Alexios I, John II (1118-43), Manuel I, the last alpha for the name of Manuel's future successor.²

The AIMA oracle probably appeared in the late 1150s or in the early 1160s. In 1169 Manuel named his only legitimate son Alexios. According to Niketas Choniates, the emperor chose this name not in honour of his celebrated ancestor Alexios I but following the AIMA sequence. Some time later (1171) the infant was designated his official heir.³

1. The research on which this article is based was made possible by the generous support of the *International Science Foundation*. My special thanks are due to Professor S.P. Karpov and Professor A.A.M. Bryer who helped me with suggestions and comments.

2. Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J.L. van Dieten, I (Berlin-New York 1975) 169. English translation: H.J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit 1984) 96.

3. The prophecy already existed before 1167, when Manuel I accused the Protostrator Alexios Axouchos, the husband of his niece Maria, of conspiracy. Niketas ended his narration of the 'conspiracy' of Axouchos with a rhetorical reproach: 'It behooved Manuel, who was worldly wise and not an ignorant and unlettered man, not to waste his labour seeking out him whose name began with *alpha* as the one to succeed him and bring an end to his rule, but to leave the charge of the reins of government to him who says he is the *alpha* and *omega* as John instructs me in the Apocalypse.'

There are some reasons to believe that the prophetic word and its interpretation appeared even earlier, before 1163. In 1163, Manuel I, who then had no male heir to succeed him, resolved the question of the succession by betrothing his daughter Maria to the Hungarian prince Bela. Bela was designated the heir of the Constantinopolitan throne. Taking the place of Manuel's heir-son, Bela was baptised according to the Orthodox rite and was renamed Alexios.

The oracular utterance of AIMA was destined to have a long and puzzling future. In his basic work on the genealogy of the Komnenoi, C. Barzos mentions how, in the beginning of the 13th century, the first four Grand Komnenoi astonishingly fulfilled the old AIMA oracle once again.⁴ In a recent article A.A.M. Bryer discussed five cases, which could be understood as attempts to build up the name sequences of AIMA in Trebizond. He assumed that the oracle preserved its influence on the dynastic policy of the Grand Komnenoi up to the middle of the 15th century.⁵

This paper interprets some Pontic texts, which reflected local Trapezuntine inflections of the AIMA conception. It analyses the contents, structure and practice of Trapezuntine AIMA, a motivating factor which noticeably affected the history of the Grand Komnenian family.

1. The Inverse AIMA

A well-known source, the memorial oration of Constantine Loukites on the death of Alexios II Grand Komnenos (1297-1330), not only confirms that Trapezuntines had not forgotten the old AIMA prediction, but also represents a specific Trapezuntine pattern of creating an AIMA sequence.⁶

It is most likely, that the emperor gave Bela this name in accordance with the AIMA prophecy. When Maria-Agnes of Antioch, the emperor's second wife, gave birth to his long-awaited son, the latter accepted the same name Alexios and adopted the right to the imperial crown from Manuel's son-in-law. Apparently, even before the betrothing of his daughter, Manuel I had been sure that his legitimate heir had to bear the name Alexios whoever he would be: either his own son or his son-in-law and foreigner. Manuel actually created a paradoxical situation: a name, already chosen to correspond to a certain place in the state hierarchy lacked only a person to bear it. See: Choniates, *Historia*, 81, 146, 169 (Magoulias, 47, 83, 96); C. Barzos, 'Η γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν (Θησαυρονική 1984), 1, 516-17; 2, 441-443, 459; J.-Cl. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)* (Paris 1990) 109. On the time of the appearance of the oracle see also below, note 22.

4. Barzos, 'Η γενεαλογία', 2, 527; *Idem*, 'La politique dynastique des Comnènes et des Anges, la prédiction AIMA (Sang) et l'héritage des Grands Comnènes de Trébizonde ■ de Anges-Comnènes-Doukas d'Épire face aux Lascarides de Nicée', *JÖB* 32/2 (1988) 357-358.

5. A.A.M. Bryer, 'Family Planning in Trebizond: The AIMA of the Grand Komnenoi', *To Hellenikon. Studies in Honour of Speros Vryonis, Jr.*, v. 1: *Hellenic Antiquity and Byzantium*, ed. J.S. Langdon (1993), 85-90.

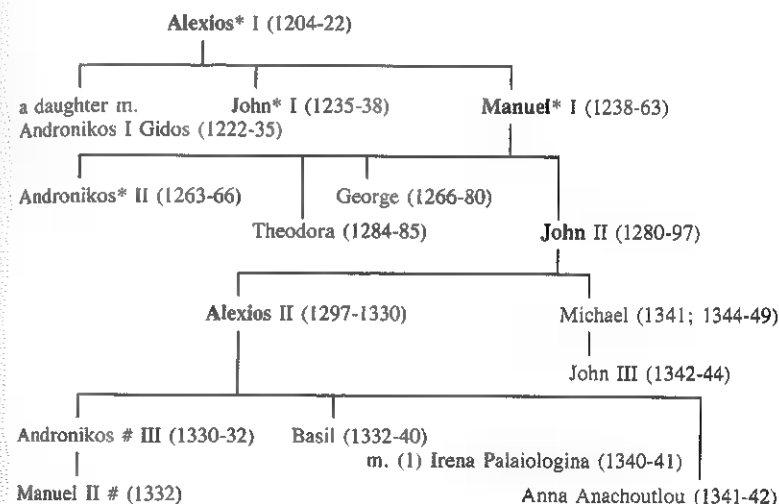
6. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Ανάλεκτα ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς σταχυολογίας', 1 (St. Petersburg 1891) 421-30.

Loukites' oration at least twice implicitly reproduced the AIMA name sequence. The author appeals to the ancestors (both Constantinopolitan and Trapezuntine) of the deceased emperor as if inviting them to receive Alexios II among them. The names of the Grand Komnenoi were enumerated in the first half of the text in the following order:⁷

- Alexios II, mentioned in the very beginning of the text;
- John II (1280-97), father of the former;
- Manuel I (1238-63), grandfather of the deceased;
- Alexios I (1204-22), his great-grandfather.

The names mentioned represent an AIMA sequence, but in a *reverse* chronological order, since the proper chronological succession of these names gives us *AMIA*. Another peculiarity is the fact that this AIMA sequence is formed according to an unusual counting method: it consists not of a simple list of ruling emperors but of generations in the family in straightforward succession from father to son (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1. The Genealogical Table of the Grand Komnenian Emperors and the AIMA Sequences



Alexios* — members of the first Trapezuntine AIMA

Alexios — members of the first Trapezuntine inverted AIMA

Andronikos # — members of the second inverse AIMA

7. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *op. cit.*, 421, 424-25.

Subsequent references by Loukites only confirm that the new AIMA system is not accidental. Appealing to the Palaiologoi, the maternal relatives and ancestors of Alexios II,⁸ he speaks of a *neon tetra-basileion* ('a new tetradic dominion') of the Palaiologoi,⁹ which undoubtedly alludes to the AIMA sequence: the Palaiologian tetrad can be considered as *new* only in comparison with the first Komnenian AIMA sequence. 'I know, you [i.e. the Palaiologoi] wish to be yourselves a part of *this list* [i.e. of the Komnenoi],¹⁰ — says Loukites, thereby confirming the connection between the Komnenian and Palaiologian tetrads.

Further on, Loukites's text presents one more AIMA enumeration, now of the Constantinopolitan Komnenoi arranged in the usual chronological order: Alexios I, John II, Manuel I, Alexios II.¹¹

According to a plausible suggestion of N. Oikonomidès, Loukites's narration on the Komnenian ancestors of Alexios II was inspired by wall paintings in the reception hall of the imperial palace in Trebizond that represented emperors of both the Constantinopolitan and the Trapezuntine branches of the family.¹² It is possible that the idea of AIMA influenced the composition of the hall decorations; at least, it seems, the classical AIMA tetrad of the 'old' Komnenoi represented a special group isolated from other portraits. Separately, or maybe even on another wall, was placed one more tetrad of Isaac the Sebastokrator (brother of Alexios I Komnenos), another Isaac the Sebastokrator (son of Alexios I), Andronikos I Komnenos (1183-85) (son of the younger Isaac), and Andronikos's son Manuel the Sebastokrator. 'Above all' (i.e. above both tetrads), Loukites says

8. Alexios II was the son of Eudokia, the third daughter of Michael VIII Palaiologos; due to this relationship, the name Palaiologos became the part of Alexios's dynastic title. See: O. Lampsides, 'Grand Comnène Paléologue', *REB* 42 (1984) 225-28.

9. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *op. cit.*, 425.

10. *Ibidem*: οἷδ' ὅτι καὶ ὁμῆς . . . τοῦ καταλόγου τούτου καὶ αὐτοὶ γενέσθαι μέρος ἡμεῖρεςθε.

11. *Ibidem*. Besides, Loukites mentioned in his text all other Trapezuntine Komnenian rulers (Gidos [Andronikos I], Axouchos [John I], George [I]) and omitted to name Andronikos II (1263-66) and Theodora (1285) (*Ibid.*, 425.15-16); N. Oikonomidès, 'The Chancery of the Grand Komnenoi', *Archeion Pontou* 35 (1975) 323 note 3.

12. Oikonomidès, *op. cit.*, 323. Cf.: J.O. Rosenqvist, 'Three Trapezuntine Notes', *BS* 54 (1993) 294-99.

that the emperor Isaac I Komnenos (1057-59) was pictured.¹³

Thus, one should conclude that not only did Loukites know the AIMA idea, as his text makes quite clear, but also that the wall paintings, from which he derived his rhetorical inspiration, were influenced by it. It is most significant that Loukites's oration as well as the wall decoration reflected the Grand Komnenian official ideology.

The unusual method of counting, as well as the reverse order of AIMA from Alexios II to Alexios I Grand Komnenos, attested by Loukites, apparently appeared at the time of the enthronement of John II, the youngest son of Manuel I, who ascended the throne in June 1280. The new emperor, to all appearance, seizes power by force and encountered serious opposition, including some members of the Grand Komnenian family. Panaretos mentioned two dangerous riots of the emperor's rivals: the uprising of a certain Papadopoulos in 1281 and the temporary usurpation of his sister Theodora in 1284-85.¹⁴

John II brought the AIMA tradition into conformity with the urgent needs of his propaganda. The inverted sequence of AIMA apparently served to justify his rights to the throne. According to the inverse AIMA, he named his son and heir Alexios.

2. Some Remarks on Komnenian 'Historiosophia'

It should be noted that the elder son and successor of Alexios II had the name Andronikos (1330-32) and the latter's elder son and heir bore the name Manuel (reigned in January-September of 1332) (see Fig. 1).¹⁵ I suggest that these names represent an allusion to Andronikos I Komnenos and his son Manuel the Sebastokrator, who were portrayed side by side on the walls of the palace hall. In this connection, the question of the nature of the Trapezuntine view of Andronikos I Komnenos's place in the AIMA tradition arises.

Barzos suggests that the AIMA pattern of Andronikos I was:

- Andronikos I Komnenos, the emperor and autokrator;
- John, the second son of Andronikos, the emperor;

13. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *op. cit.*, 425-26. Another interpretation in: J.O. Rosenqvist, 'Three Trapezuntine Notes', 297-98.

14. Panaretos, *Περὶ τῶν Μεγάλων Κομνηνῶν*, ed. O. Lampsides (Athens 1958) 62.9-63.9.

15. Panaretos, 64.

- Manuel, the elder son of Andronikos and one-day pretender to the Byzantine throne;
- Alexios I Grand Komnenos, the elder son of Manuel, the emperor and autokrator.

Andronikos I Gidos, therefore, opened the first Trapezuntine AIMA sequence.¹⁶ However, in spite of its outward elegance this scheme arouses some objections.

To go back to the 1180s: Andronikos I Komnenos was attached to predictive magic even more than his predecessor and cousin Manuel I. At first, after accession to the throne, Andronikos preferred as his heir Alexios the Protostrator, illegitimate son of Manuel I, over his own sons; and he married the Protostrator to his daughter Irene (autumn 1183). However, he changed his mind very soon and deprived the Protostrator of his benevolence. Andronikos said to his intimate confidants that, 'according to divine plan' the imperial power should not pass from alpha to alpha but from alpha to iota.¹⁷ Towards the end of 1183, Andronikos chose for the throne John, the younger of his two legitimate sons, who became the emperor and his father's co-ruler.

It was thus Andronikos I, or maybe one of his advisers, who modified the earlier interpretation of the AIMA prediction. Andronikos claimed that the AIMA sequence, which had been accomplished in the names of the first four Komnenoi, would be repeated in the names of the future Komnenian emperors, and it was Andronikos himself who had opened it anew. In other words, Andronikos discovered a reiterative and cyclical character of the sequence: Andronikos I founded the *second classical AIMA*.¹⁸

The AIMA prediction became a pretext (and perhaps to some extent the cause) not only for removing Alexios the Protostrator from the succession, but also for violating the preferred succession rights of

16. Barzos, *op. cit.*, 2, 527.

17. Choniates, *Historia*, 1, 425-26 (Magoulias, 234).

18. According to Barzos's suggestion, the prophetic books of Mamalos, the secretary of Alexios the Protostrator, which contained a list of future Byzantine emperors, were based on the AIMA idea. It does not seem impossible that Andronikos borrowed the idea of the second AIMA sequence from the books of Mamalos. See: Choniates, *Historia*, 1, 310-312 (Magoulias, 172-73); Barzos, *op. cit.*, 2, 489-490.

Manuel. Manuel openly opposed his father's repressive policy, which certainly could have influenced Andronikos's decision, apart from other considerations.¹⁹ Despite that, Manuel probably was expected to take the third place in the AIMA after John. During the revolt in Constantinople, in 1185, the shadow of the imperial crown touched Manuel's head, when Andronikos I abdicated the throne in his elder son's favour.

Some evidence in the Trapezuntine sources can be interpreted as an allusion to the structure of the second classical AIMA pattern. It was probably the fourth element of the sequence which was meant in an enigmatic phrase from the 'Verses on the Assumption of the Virgin' of Andrew Libadenos (composed in the 1360s). Commonplace praise of the emperor Alexios III include the following lines:

Of the offspring of the Komnenoi, of the son of Basil,
Of Alexios [i.e., Alexios III], who is the third from Alexios [i.e., Alexios I,
Grand Komnenos]
And the sixth from the first and also Alexios [i.e. Alexios I Komnenos].²⁰

However, there were, as we know, not *six*, but only *five* emperors who bore the name Alexios in the Komnenian family from the Constantinopolitan Alexios I to the Trapezuntine Alexios III. Who is the sixth Alexios? Most likely Libadenos meant a certain Alexios, the *third* from the Alexios I Komnenos, another then Alexios I Grand Komnenos, who had, according to Trapezuntines, closed Andronikos I's AIMA series. There can be no doubt that Libadenos revealed an official point of view on the genealogy of the reigning family. Thus, Barzos's suggestion on the places of Alexios I Grand Komnenos and Andronikos I Gidos in Andronikos's and the first Trapezuntine AIMA sequences must be rejected.

The example cited gives us a convincing argument for suggesting that Trapezuntines admitted the existence of Andronikos's AIMA

19. Eustathios of Thessalonica, *La espugnazione di Tessalonica*, ed. S. Kyriakides (Palermo 1961) 52; Barzos, *op. cit.*, 2, 488.

20. Libadenos: Ἀνδρεῦ Λιβαδηνοῦ βίος καὶ ἔργα, ed. O. Lampides (Athens 1975) 107.63-66: κομνηνοφυᾶ βασιλείου τὸν γόνον, / τὸν Ἀλέξιον, ἐξ Ἀλεξίου τρίτον, / ἕκτον δὲ πρώτου καὶ πάλιν Ἀλεξίου . . .

series and had a certain idea of its components. The Protostrator Alexios, or the emperor Alexios III Angelos, are hardly appropriate for the fourth position in Andronikos's series, because it is unlikely that they could be recognised by the Grand Komnenoi as the legitimate heirs of the line of Andronikos I.²¹ But who was this Alexios, the last component of this AIMA formula?

For the last position in the sequence I would, in fact, propose Alexios, the youngest illegitimate son of Andronikos. It seems probable that Andronikos's pattern might be represented by the 'family tetrad', which consisted of Andronikos and his three sons (Manuel, John and Alexios).²² Andronikos might thus follow the well-known scheme of the BEKLAS oracle, which was given by Photios to Basil I (867-886); the six letters of BEKLAS present the initial letters of the names of Basil I, his wife Eudokia, and his four sons (Constantine, Leon, Alexander and Stephanos).²³ Thus, Andronikos I possibly planned the following sequence:

- Andronikos I Komnenos;
- John, the second son of the latter;
- Manuel, the elder son of Andronikos I;
- Alexios, the youngest illegitimate son of Andronikos I.

Alexios, the son of Andronikos I and his niece and mistress Theodora, escaped from Constantinople soon after the revolt of 1185. Around the year 1188/89 Alexios appeared in Georgia, where he married a Georgian girl and founded the dynasty of the 'kings' of Alastani (the family of Andronikashvili or 'the scions of Andronikos').²⁴ The high position of Alexios which he had in Georgia perhaps only confirmed, in the eyes of Trapezuntines, his rights to be named the subject of AIMA.

21. Cf.: Barzos, 'La politique', 356.

22. Possibly, the AIMA prophecy at the time of the birth of Manuel (1145) was not current for Andronikos or, more likely, did not then exist. This assumption may explain why the name *Manuel* preceded, out of order, the name *John*.

23. See, for example: Nicetas Paphlagonos, PG 105, 565-568; Symeon Magistros (Bonn 1838) 689-690; Manasses (Bonn 1836), 5309-5319 (p.226-227); Georges Pachymères: *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, 1 (Paris 1984) 48-49, note 2.

24. C. Toumanoff, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de la Caucase chrétienne (Arménie-Géorgie-Albanie)* (Roma 1977) 578; Barzos, 'Η γενεαλογία', 1, 638; 2, 535-7.

If the verse of Libadenos reflected Andronikos's own intention to create a 'family AIMA', we have to ascribe to the latter one more innovation in the tradition. However, it seems very possible that the Grand Komnenoi imagined the structure of Andronikos's AIMA rather differently from Andronikos himself, proving themselves again, in the words of Bryer, to be 'more Komnenian than the Komnenoi'.²⁵

There is, indeed, little doubt that Manuel, the Sebastokrator and the elder son of Andronikos I, was included by the Trapezuntines in his father's AIMA group, despite lacking the imperial rank. As mentioned, the palace wall-decoration depicted Andronikos Komnenos only with Manuel the Sebastokrator beside two other Sebastokrators named Isaac. As seen and described by F. Uspenskij, the portraits of the royal group in the palace chapel, in spite of all their obscurities, resemble the composition of these hall decorations. According to the interpretation of Oikonomidès, the inscription that accompanied the chapel portraits contained the names of Isaac the Sebastokrator, his son Andronikos I, and the latter's son Manuel.²⁶

Manuel followed Andronikos not only in the wall-decorations. The names of Andronikos III and Manuel II, the son and grandson of Alexios II, reproduced the iconographical scheme in reality. These names undoubtedly represent an example of deliberate family planning, undertaken during the reign of Alexios II: both Grand Komnenoi were born in Alexios's lifetime and both were legitimate heirs of the imperial power.²⁷

Obviously, the Trapezuntine tradition switched the positions of John and Manuel in the second classical AIMA, correcting Andronikos's 'error' in favour of Manuel:

- Andronikos I Komnenos;
- Manuel, the elder son of Andronikos I;
- John, the second son of the latter;
- Alexios, the youngest illegitimate son of Andronikos I.

25. Bryer, 'Family planning', 85.

26. F. Uspenskij, *Očerki iz istorii Trapezundskoj imperii* (Leningrad 1929) 40-41. Oikonomidès, *op. cit.*, 324. Cf.: A. Bryer and D. Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos* 1 (Washington D.C. 1985) 184.

27. According to Panaretos, in January 1332 Manuel II was eight years old and, therefore, was born about 1324 (Panaretos, 64.11-12).

Indeed, this correction makes sense, since Manuel was undoubtedly honoured in Trebizond as the father of Alexios I Grand Komnenos, the glorious re-founder of the Komnenian Empire in Trebizond. Thus, the Grand Komnenoi conceptualised the scheme of Andronikos I as an inverted AIMA sequence: to wit, AMIA. I would suggest that it was this scheme that underlay the precedent of the inverse AIMA of John II and Alexios II (see above). In John II's view, AMIA was no less traditional than the primary AIMA.

3. The first Grand Komnenian AIMA

I trust that the previous discussion has dispelled any doubt that the first Grand Komnenian AIMA, founded by Alexios I Grand Komnenos, appeared as a result of deliberate name planning:²⁸

- Alexios I (1204-22);
[Andronikos I Gidos (1222-35), the husband of the oldest daughter of Alexios I];
- John I (1235-38), the elder son of Alexios I;
- Manuel I (1238-63), the second son of Alexios I;
- Andronikos II (1263-66), the elder son of Manuel, who 'ruled according to the will and choice of his father'.²⁹

As remarked above, the opinion of Barzos, who started this AIMA formula with the name of Andronikos I Gidos, is at variance with all the available information in the sources.³⁰ I suggest that the alpha of Alexios I's son-in-law Andronikos I Gidos could be regarded as assimilated to the previous alpha or simply excluded from the AIMA sequence altogether, since Andronikos I Gidos was not of the Komnenian blood.

Plausibly, the family tetrad of Andronikos I Komnenos and, maybe in addition, the precedent of BEKLAS inspired Alexios I Grand Komnenos to name his sons following the AIMA sequence and to create, this time, at least a *family triad*. Bryer supposed that if Andronikos II Grand Komnenos, the elder son of Manuel I, was born

28. See Case 2 in: Bryer, 'Family planning', 87.

29. Panaretos, 62.2.

30. See also: Bryer, 'Family planning', 86-87.

before Alexios I's death, the latter could have controlled all four letters of his AIMA during his lifetime.³¹

After the death of the childless Andronikos II (1266) the chain of AIMA was broken by fourteen years of rivalry between the younger scions of Manuel I. We can only guess what happened to the AIMA idea during this period, and why some decades later Loukites unexpectedly excluded Andronikos II's name from his list of the Komnenian rulers.³²

4. The Question of Alexios-John and the Civil War (1332-63)

During the whole history of the Empire of Trebizond, a legitimate heir of the throne, usually the elder son of the reigning emperor,³³ bore a name belonging to the first Constantinopolitan AIMA cycles: Alexios, John, Manuel and Andronikos.³⁴ Emperors bearing non-AIMA names (George, Michael, Basil and David) belonged to minor branches of the Grand Komnenoi and their accession to the throne was usually a violation of the legitimate succession.

On these grounds, one might reasonably assume that the breach of the legitimate succession and of the inverse AIMA of Andronikos III and Manuel II could be the pretext for, perhaps even one of the causes of, the Civil War, which began in 1332 with the accession of Basil Grand Komnenos, the second son of Alexios II. He seized the throne from the legitimate but underaged emperor Manuel II, his nephew, crushed the opposition movement of the nobility, and finally murdered the dethroned young emperor in prison. In March 1337 the Trapezuntine mob rebelled against Basil. The Civil War escalated after his death (6 April 1340), when Basil's second wife Irene of Trebizond went into exile and his first wife Irene Palaiologina came to power.³⁵ Thereafter Anna Anachoutlou, John III (1342-44), and

31. Bryer, 'Family planning', 87.

32. See note 11; Bryer, 'Family planning', 87-88.

33. This order of succession was preferred in classic Komnenian times as well. See, for example, Choniates, *Historia*, 1, 44, 49.

34. See also: Bryer, 'Family planning', 86.

35. Panaretos, 64. A.A.M. Bryer, 'Eclipses and Epithalamy in fourteenth-century Trebizond', in: *Byzantium. A Tribute to Andreas N. Stratos*, II (Athens 1986) 347-352 — *idem*, *Peoples and Settlement in Anatolia and the Caucasus*, Collected Studies (London 1988), VI; E. Kislinger, 'Macht und Moixeia am Hof von Trapezunt', *JÖB* 44 (1994) 245-253.

the latter's father and rival Michael (1344-49) successively seized the Komnenian crown (see Fig. 1). The key element in this internal strife was the permanent struggle of archontic alliances, both against the centralised power and between one another.³⁶

The Civil War came to an end only in 1363, during the reign of Alexios III (1349-90), the second son of Basil.³⁷ The signs of reconciliation within the Empire became apparent from the very beginning of Alexios III's rule. Of course, the answer to the question, why the people of Trebizond and archontic clans preferred Alexios to any other, should not be looked for in the Grand Komnenian genealogies and AIMA rules only. Nevertheless, I believe that the formal aspect of Alexios III's accession could not be neglected by the Trapezuntines themselves.

From this point of view the rule of Irene and Anna could hardly be recognised as legitimate by the majority of Trapezuntines: Irene was not of the Grand Komnenian blood, and there were male pretenders in the family who were more appropriate for the succession than the defrocked nun Anna. It is possible that Anna pretended to be a member of the inverse AIMA of Andronikos III and Manuel II, but her name had nothing in common with AIMA apart from its initial.³⁸

36. See: A.A.M. Bryer, 'The Faithless Kabazitai and Scholarioi', in: *Maistor: Classical, Byzantine, Renaissance Studies for R. Browing* (Canberra 1984) especially, 310-13 = *idem*, *Peoples and Settlement*, VII.

37. Panaretos, 69.11; Bryer, 'The Faithless Kabazitai and Scholarioi', 310.

38. Moreover, Palaiologina and Anna chiefly relied on the barbarian soldiers in the Trapezuntine service. The Laz won the throne for the empress Anna. Irene's army consisted of a part of the palace *allagion* and the detachment of the *amirtzantarantai*; it is very possible that the main body of the *amirtzantarantai* was recruited from Turkish mercenaries. It appears that during these two reigns the Pontic aristocratic clans acted as guarantors of the legitimacy of the supreme power. Great archontic families (the Scholarioi, Tzanichitai, Doranitai, Kamachenoi, Kabazitai, Meizomatai) fought in alliance against both empresses. With the accession of John III the Pontic noble families took vengeance on the *amirtzantarantai*, putting to death their commanders (*archontes*). From that time, this detachment was under the command of the members of the archontic clans. See: Panaretos, 65-67; Bryer, 'The Faithless Kabazitai and Scholarioi', 312; cf. R. Shukurov, 'Between Peace and Hostility: Trebizond and the Pontic Turkish Periphery in the Fourteenth Century', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 9/1 (1994) 54-62.

Although some archontic families supported John III, evidently his claim to the crown remained questionable while his father Michael was still alive. Michael, the younger brother of Alexios II, in comparison with his predecessors, had preferable rights to the throne as the oldest if not the eldest member of the Grand Komnenian family at that time. However, Michael's obvious weakness was his non-AIMA name. Alexios III undoubtedly had the advantage over him of belonging to the elder branch of the Grand Komnenoi as well as of bearing a classical AIMA name. But the name of Alexios III presents a special problem: it seems that his name was different at different times.³⁹

Alexios III was born on 5 October 1338, of the Trapezuntine *despoina* Irene, who married Basil only in July 1339 (therefore, he was not of legitimate birth). According to Michael Panaretos, he was at first named John, but later 'he was named (ἐπονομασθεὶς) *kyr* Alexios, after his grandfather' (i.e., Alexios II).⁴⁰ It may be that this renaming, an event unprecedented in Trapezuntine history, which even the laconic Panaretos mentioned twice in his chronicle, was bound up with the tradition of AIMA.⁴¹

First, the question arises: *when* was John renamed Alexios? I suggest that it was closely connected with the legalisation of his parents' relationship and followed the marriage of Basil and Irene of Trebizond. It appears that John could be *rebaptised*, rather than only *nicknamed*, as Alexios. So also recognising him as the emperor's legitimate son and heir. This suggestion finds confirmation in the fact that the name of the second son of Basil and Irene of Trebizond was John, too (see Fig. 2). Panaretos mentioned him under the nickname Kaloioannes, or 'Good John'.⁴² It is obvious that the existence, in the same family, of two sons bearing one and the same baptismal name represents a glaring violation of custom. Therefore, Kaloioannes, I suggest, was born and baptised *after* the act of renaming (or rebaptising) his elder brother (in the second half of 1339) and before

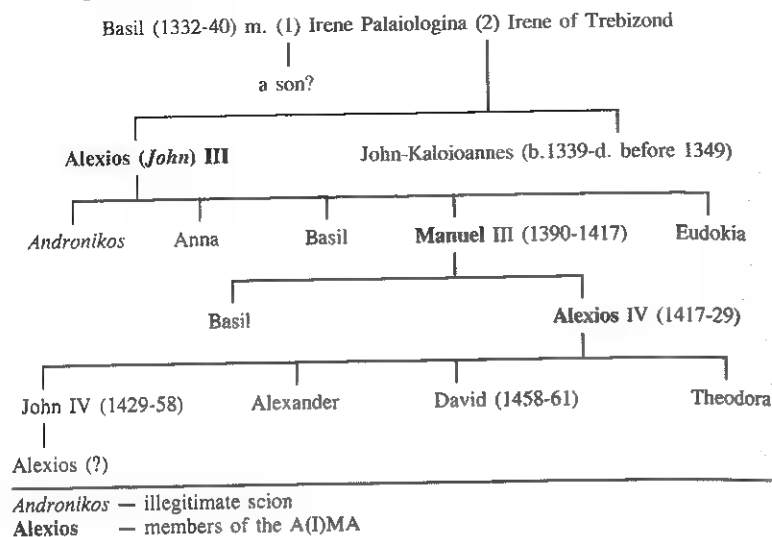
39. See also Bryer, 'Family Planning', 87-89.

40. Panaretos, 69.11-12, 65.8; cf. Bryer, 'Family Planning', 87; *idem*, 'Eclipses and Epithalamy', 348-50.

41. Bryer, 'Family Planning', 89.

42. Panaretos, 65.15.

Figure 2. Selected Genealogy of the Scions of Basil Grand Komnenos



April 1340, when his mother, together with her two sons, went into exile to Constantinople.⁴³ Kaloioannes is not mentioned again in the sources; he had apparently died before Irene returned to Trebizond (1349).

Basil, usurper and owner of a non-AIMA name, attempted to create a new *family* sequence, giving his sons two letters of AIMA. As Bryer stated, this act of renaming was the only way of giving legitimacy to Basil's heir.⁴⁴ However, I do not connect Alexios III's name with the names of Michael, John II and Andronikos II in a separate AIMA formula, as Bryer would. On the contrary, I think that Basil, as well as his son's supporters in 1349, expected Alexios to be the founder of a new AIMA.

Nevertheless, the AIMA principle obviously lost its significance as an absolute imperative with the accession of Alexios III. After

43. Panaretos, 65.14-15; A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Fontes Historiae Imperii Trapezuntini*, 1 (St. Petersburg 1897) 134.17-18.

44. Bryer, *ibid.*

seventeen years of war AIMA might well have appeared to Alexios III to be, to use Bryer's expression, 'too bloody'.⁴⁵

At first the official heir of Alexios III was his illegitimate son Andronikos the Despot (see Fig. 2). After the death of the latter, in 1376, the future emperor Manuel, the second legitimate son of Alexios, was chosen for the succession.⁴⁶ I doubt that this reflects deliberate AIMA planning. Moreover, in the time of Alexios III and his successors attempts were made to introduce a new trend in the imperial mythology of the Grand Komnenoi, which was aimed at connecting and comparing Alexios III's deeds with those of the Macedonian emperors, especially of Basil II (976-1025).⁴⁷ The elder legitimate son of Alexios III had the name Basil but apparently died young. The elder son of Manuel III also bore the name Basil, and suffered the same fate before 1395.⁴⁸

It is not impossible, however, that towards the end of the fourteenth century a new AIMA appeared in the refined minds of the Trapezuntines:

- Alexios-John;
- Manuel III (1390-1417), the son of Alexios-John and co-emperor from 1376;
- Alexios IV (1417-29), the son of Manuel and co-emperor from 1395.

Thus, the first Constantinopolitan tetrad was repeated in a shortened shape: A(I)MA (see Fig. 2). I assume it was the idea of A(I)MA that inspired the words of Panaretos on the names of Alexios-John, for it is otherwise difficult to see why Panaretos, who had completed his historical work in the 1390s after the death of Alexios-John, wrote twice about this renaming. I propose, therefore, that the idea of A(I)MA reappeared during the reign of Manuel III and, most likely, about 1395, when his elder son Basil was already dead and his second

45. Bryer, 'Family Planning', 88.

46. Panaretos, 73.1, 78.11-17, 80.5; cf. Bryer, 'Family Planning', 89.

47. S. Lampakis, 'Μακεδονική δυναστεία και Μεγαλοκομνηνοί. Σχόλια σχετικά με τα ιστορικά στοιχεία στα "Θαύματα του Αγίου Εϋγενίου" του Ιωάννη-Ιωσήφ Λαζαρόπουλου', *Σύμμεικτα* 8 (1989) 319-33.

48. Panaretos, 73.1, 80.5.

son Alexios was designated heir and co-ruler. It appears that only chance reminded Manuel III of his father's old name and permitted him to build up the last AIMA group in Trapezuntine history.

In the 15th century, the AIMA tradition was finally lost. After the death of Alexios IV in 1429, and up to the fall of the Empire in 1461, there are no signs of a new AIMA. But the Trapezuntines did not forget the old oracle, and it may be that Bessarion, in the 1430s, alluded to AIMA when he wrote that the Constantinopolitan and Trapezuntine Komnenoi 'were of the same family and blood' (καὶ ταύτου γένους ὄντες καὶ αἵματος).⁴⁹

5. Seljuq AIMA?

The prophecy of AIMA may well have impressed not only the Byzantines, but their Muslim neighbours in the Rum Sultanate. The Sultanate of Ikonion presented in the 13th century the following regular order of Seljuqid rulers' names, unprecedented in the whole of Islamic history:

Sequence I

- Ghiyath al-Din Kai Khusraw I (1192-96; 1205-11);
- 'Izz al-Din Kai Kawus I (1211-19);
- 'Ala' al-Din Kai Qubad I (1219-37).

Sequence II

- Ghiyath al-Din Kai Khusraw II (1237-45);
- 'Izz al-Din Kai Kawus II (1245-56);
- 'Ala' al-Din Kai Qubad II (co-ruler in 1250-56).

Sequence III

- Ghiyath al-Din Kai Khusraw III (1266-82);
- (. . .)
- 'Ala' al-Din Kai Qubad III (1284-1305).⁵⁰

Kai Khusraw, Kai Kawus and Kai Qubad are the names of the

49. Bessarion, "Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Τραπεζοῦντα", ed. O. Lampsides, *Archeion Pontou* 39 (1984) 60.4.

50. I deliberately omit the details of the intricate dynastic struggle in the Sultanate and give here ■ somewhat simplified list of the Seljuq rulers.

legendary kings of the Iranian epic, the fullest compilation of which was made by Abu al-Qasim Firdawsi (934-1021) in his famous poem the '*Shah-nama*' ('The Book of Kings'). Adopting these particularly Iranian and Zoroastrian names in combination with Islamic ones, the Seljuqs of Rum stressed their spiritual unity with the Muslim imperial tradition as well as with the great monarchies of Ancient Iran.⁵¹ One may assume that it was the Seljuqid devotion to the Iranian tradition that, in addition, inspired the Byzantines to refer to the Seljuqs more often as 'Persians' instead of a precise denomination 'Turks' (the latter name was known in Byzantium long before the appearance of the Seljuqs on the Byzantine borders).⁵²

An enigmatic peculiarity should be noted, in that the sequence of these Iranian royal names in the Seljuq dynastic groups is exactly opposite to the epic one; the proper sequence attested in the '*Shah-nama*' is: Kai Qubad, Kai Kawus, Kai Khusraw. This recalls the strange inversion of the AIMA sequence which occurred in Trebizond.

Although such Iranian royal names served the purely internal purposes of the Seljuqid imperial conception, the idea of the cycle was itself apparently borrowed from the Constantinopolitan Komnenoi and, possibly, animated by the experience of the Grand Komnenoi.

Ghiyath al-Din Kai Khusraw I, the son of Qilij Arslan II (1156-92) and his Greek Christian wife, started the first 'Seljuq AIMA'. Kai Khusraw was expelled from Rum by his brother and took refuge in Constantinople in 1196-1204. Ghiyath al-Din was said to have accustomed himself to the Constantinopolitan way of life. Rumi Muslims were shocked to learn that the exiled Sultan absolutely ignored the Sharia^c laws. There were rumours among the Ikonion Muslims that Ghiyath al-Din was even baptised by Alexios III Angelos (1195-1203). In the Byzantine capital Ghiyath al-Din married the daughter of Manuel Maurozomos, whose maternal grandfather was the glorious

51. On the role of the Persian ancestry among the Anatolian Muslims during the Seljuqid period see: Cl. Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey* (London 1968) 152-153, 216, 238, 248-60, 369-70.

52. See: Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 2 (Berlin 1983) 252-54, 322-23. Cf. B. Lehmann, *Die Nachrichten des Nicetas Choniates, Georgios Akropolites und Pachymeres über die Selcuquen in der Zeit von 1180 bis 1280 n. Chr.* (Leipzig 1939) 14.

Manuel I Komnenos, himself a member of an AIMA group.⁵³

It may then be less surprising that Ghiyath al-Din, well acquainted with the life of the Byzantine court, may have been impressed by the idea of the AIMA cycles, and tried to reproduce one on Rumi soil.

The Seljuq imitation of this Byzantine scheme may in addition have had a special meaning. It is well known that the Seljuqs, as later the Ottomans, represented themselves as the sole and true heirs of the power of the ecumenical Roman Empire.⁵⁴ The official name of the Ikonion sultans' possessions, commonly accepted in the Islamic world, was the 'Sultanate of Rome' (*saltanat-ur-rum*), which was understood by the contemporary Muslims as an equivalent of the Greek ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν Ῥωμαίων and the Latin 'Imperium Romanorum'. The Ikonion rulers thus claimed in effect that they were the sultans of the 'Empire of Rome'. In the relationship of Ghiyath al-Din to the 'Roman' emperor Manuel I and in the sultan's imitation of the 'Roman' AIMA idea, his compatriots might, perhaps, see an allusion to the conception of the Rumi-Roman identity.

Conclusion

The influence of the oracular word AIMA on the Byzantine mind seems to have been profound. In his accounts, Niketas Choniates reveals the spirit of late Komnenian times, with the enormous popularity of predictive astrology and magic. The belief that all future events are recorded in celestial tables and that the heavens are covered with writings like a book prompted individuals to take a real interest in these writings and to try to avoid violating the Divine Will. Only an astrologer and forecaster was able to 'read' these heavenly prescriptions and to interpret them for others.

Predictions in the form of words, riddles and even letters of obscure meaning, which required special interpretation, were widespread in the Byzantine world of the twelfth to the fourteenth century. Contemporary sources recorded a number of such predictions, like

53. O. Turan, 'Les souverains seldjoukides et leurs sujets non-musulmans', *Studia Islamica* 1 (1953) 79-80; Barzos, 'Η γενεαλογία', 2, 499 note.

54. See, for example: S.J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 1 (Cambridge 1978) 56; Barzos, *op. cit.* 1, 484-85, note 27; 2, 504-5, note 1.

the letters SI which referred to the name of Andronikos I's successor; or an enigmatic word MARPOU associated with the future emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos. There were illustrious masters of interpretation, like the notorious Seth in the age of Manuel I and Andronikos I, or the aforementioned Mamalos, or Manuel Disypatos, the metropolitan of Thessalonica, who interpreted the word MARPOU.⁵⁵

The persistent power of the AIMA prediction can be attributed to its multifarious meaning. The word AIMA which signified for the Byzantines and Trapezuntines the initial letters of the names of the Komnenian emperors, means 'blood', 'relationship' and 'kin', and was especially appropriate to this illustrious family and noble line. Furthermore, the word consists of four characters, which is one of the sacred numbers (the tetrad, for example, symbolised the square, which signified the stability of the cosmic order, four natures, seasons, winds, parts of the world, etc.; as well as the Four Gospels, Angels of the Apocalypse, etc.)

In Trebizond AIMA existed as a dynastic principle or rule, which had quite definite characteristics. The AIMA cycles could be made up of only four traditional 'AIMA names', all male: Alexios, Andronikos, John, Manuel. The seizure of imperial power by owners of non-AIMA names, especially by female pretenders, should therefore be understood as a violation of the AIMA principle. The Grand Komnenoi knew two equivalent models of the name sequences: direct (AIMA) and inverse (AMIA). Both were formed according to one of at least three schemes: (1) 'family AIMA', which consisted of the father, his sons and sometimes his grandsons; (2) 'generational AIMA', which referred only to straightforward succession from father to son (father-son-grandson-great-grandson); (3) a simple sequence of actual Komnenian rulers.

However interpreted (then or today) in Trapezuntine dynastic policy, AIMA sequences undoubtedly gave strength to the rivalry within the

55. Choniates, *Historia*, 1, 147-148, 340; Pachymeres, ed. Failler, 47-49; S. Lampakis, "Υπερφυσικές δυνάμεις, φυσικά φαινόμενα και δεισιδαιμονίες στην ιστορία του Γεωργίου Παχυμέρη", *Σύμμεικτα* 7 (1987) 77-100. For general discussion see P. Magdalino, 'The History of the Future and its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda', in: *The Making of Byzantine History. Studies Dedicated to D.M. Nicol* (London 1993) 3-34, esp. 26-27.

royal family, although during the fight for the throne between different branches of the Komnenian family in the 1260-70s and 1332-49, it would have been hazardous to plan names ahead.⁵⁶

But our conclusions about the role of the AIMA prediction in Trapezuntine policy find support in the fact that Trebizond was a centre of highly developed predictive sciences.⁵⁷ It is worth recalling that Andrew Libadenos (among others) came from Constantinople to Trebizond because 'astronomical sciences are better developed; not in Athens, but in that city [astronomical] science has come from Chaldaia'.⁵⁸ In the thirteenth century and for some time later, Trebizond was the main centre of astrological scholarship in the Byzantine world. Astrology was the sole field of intellectual activity in which Trebizond, provincial in spirit, surpassed Constantinople; moreover, the revival of the science in Byzantium owed a considerable debt to the Trapezuntine astrological school. First mentions of the astrological school of Trebizond go back to Byzantine authors of the end of the 13th century and reveal a rising interest in astrological studies in Byzantium itself; one can suggest that the flourishing of Trapezuntine astrology started even earlier with the establishment of Komnenian power in Trebizond.

Astrologers were numbered among high Trapezuntine state officials as exemplified by Constantine Loukites (*protonotarios* and *protovestiaros* of the Empire) and Andrew Libadenos (*prototabularios* of the Empire and the official panegyrist of the Komnenoi).⁵⁹ The account of Nikephoros Gregoras on Persian astrologers escaping from the Muslim regions to Trebizond may explain the appearance, at the Komnenian court in the early fourteenth century, of a certain Kh^waja Lulu — to judge by his name a Persian or a Kurd — who was a physician of Alexios II; the connection between astrology

56. See also: Bryer, 'Family Planning', 86.

57. Bryer, 'Family Planning', 85-6; *idem*, 'Eclipses and Epithalamy', 350 and note 3.

58. Libadenos, 60. 1-3.

59. S.P. Karpov, 'Kultura Trapezundskoj imperii', in: *Kultura Vizantii* 3 (Moscow 1991) 113-14.

and medicine was always close and one can assume that Kh^waja Lulu was one of these Persian refugees.⁶⁰

Not only did the imperial court stimulate astrological studies, even the Church became a major patron: famous Trapezuntine masters of astrology taught at the monastery of St. Eugenios and later, after its destruction by fire in 1340, in St. Sophia. It seems that astrology acquired the character of an 'imperial science' cherished by the State and Church.

Indeed, the AIMA prophecy was inherited by the Trapezuntines not simply as a result of their faith in the occult. Niketas, a highly enlightened intellectual, spoke of the AIMA prophecy with some disdain and considered faith in it no more than unworthy superstition. Other contemporary authors did not condescend to mention the prophecy despite its obvious popularity and influence. In the age of the Grand Komnenoi the idea of AIMA sequences was legitimated; the AIMA tetrad played the role of an old family tradition, consecrated by the authority of the illustrious ancestors of the Grand Komnenoi. The devotion of Trapezuntine rulers to the splendid past of their family was manifested in many ways and sources.⁶¹ The belief in AIMA preserved by the Trapezuntine Komnenoi is yet another example of their sense of unity with their great Constantinopolitan ancestors.⁶²

*Department of Medieval History,
Moscow State University*

60. Nicephorus Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. L. Shopen, 1 (Bonn 1829) 447; E. Minns, 'Big Greek Minuscule, Pembroke College, Cambridge MS 310', *The Annual of the British School of Athens* 46 (1951) 215; Chrysanthos, 'Ἡ ἐκκλησία Τραπεζούντος' (Athens 1933) 358.

61. See: Karpov, 'Kultura Trapezundskoj imperii'; Oikonomides, *op. cit.*; Bryer, 'Family Planning'.

62. See also: Bryer, 'Family Planning', 85-86.

The Fine Incense of Virginité: a late twelfth century wallpainting of the Annunciation at the Monastery of the Syrians, Egypt

LUCY-ANNE HUNT

Introduction

A richly symbolical wallpainting of the Annunciation was brought to light in 1991 in the western conch of the church of the Virgin at the desert Monastery of the Syrians at Scetis (Wadi al-Natrûn) in Egypt (figs. 1-5).¹ The interpretation put forward here is that the scene celebrates the Mother of God as the epitome of perfect womanhood at the moment of Christ's conception with her key rôle reinforced by explicit symbolism of her virginité. This is stated visually, through the liturgical symbolism of the burning censer at her feet, and verbally through the 'container' imagery proclaimed on the scrolls of the accompanying prophets: Isaiah, Moses, Ezekiel and Daniel. A detailed townscape represents the town of Nazareth, both the Virgin's own birthplace and the site of the Annunciation.

Dan Sperber has pointed to the luxuriant nature of symbols. Like spirits, he says, they are more interesting than their message, cognitive, evocative and not entirely rational (unlike signs).² Here a multiplicity of symbols is indeed infinitely more complex than any direct message of the Virgin's purity and her power to intercede. The incense and 'container' typology reconfigures and embroiders existing imagery of the Virgin. And yet the complexity of the scene

1. I am grateful to Revd. Prof. P. van Moorsel for facilitating my work and his kind permission to reproduce the photographs of the wallpainting included here. This paper was presented at a Table ronde on the wallpainting at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, 25-26 March 1994. Summaries of all the papers will appear in *Cahiers archéologiques* 43 (1995), in press.

2. D. Sperber, *Rethinking Symbolism* (Cambridge 1974) especially 6-16.

has also caused confusion. There is no consensus as to its date, and little interpretation has been offered as to its meaning. But reference to the art of Byzantium and the eastern Mediterranean, as well as to Coptic painting, can inform this debate. I argue here that both symbolic imagery and style are explicable in the context of inter-communal and liturgical debate at the monastery of the Syrians (Dayr al-Suryān) towards the end of the twelfth century, specifically the 1170s-early 1180s. The approach here, then, is to study the scene as a product of a monastery in Egypt, populated by Syrian Jacobite and — especially important at the time the Annunciation was painted — Coptic monks, in contact with other contemporary Christian cultures. At this time the Coptic church was locked in controversy over matters of liturgical practice, specifically the rôle of incense in the liturgy, an issue central to this painting.

An important discovery for medieval art history, the scene's imagery of the Mother of God adds a new dimension to our understanding of Marian devotion in the late twelfth century, largely because of its cross-cultural associations. The artist drew on the art of Byzantium and the West to create an innovative devotional and liturgical imagery of the Virgin. This is a manifestation of the contemporary rise in imagery which reflects devotion to the Virgin, the Mother of God, as paragon of womankind and intercessor for humankind.³ On the one hand it is in line with Byzantine Annunciation scenes in which Marian imagery of renewal and fertility has been linked to homilistic literature.⁴ On the other, it reflects the western glorification of the Virgin as the Queen of Heaven.⁵ These eastern and western ideas are creatively fused in the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation.

3. On these categories of the Virgin see, in general, M. Warner, *Alone of Her Sex* (rpt, London 1990). Recent studies concerning the veneration to the Virgin are referred to by P.D. Leveto, 'The Marian Theme of the Frescoes in S. Maria at Castelseprio', *Art Bulletin* 72 (1990) 411 n. 82.

4. H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton 1981) especially 44-52.

5. This is particularly apparent in the Coronation of the Virgin: see P. Verdier, *Le couronnement de la Vierge: Les origines et les premiers développements d'un thème iconographique* (Institut d'études médiévales, Albert-le-grand, Montréal) (Paris 1972) and P. Schine Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago and London 1985) especially 51-65.

The wallpainting occupies the western conch of the church of the church of the Virgin (al-'Adra) at Dayr al-Suryān (Plan and Scheme, figs. 6 and 7, where its position is marked X).

The Annunciation focuses on the central, seated Virgin, paired with the angel who approaches from her left (figs. 1,2,3). The scene takes place before a detailed townscape of Nazareth (figs. 1,2,5). The couple are flanked with a pair of prophets on either side (figs. 1,2,4): Isaiah and Moses to their right and Ezekiel and Daniel to their left. Inscriptions on the painting are in Greek and Bohairic Coptic: Gabriel's message to the Virgin and the names of the prophets, at their feet, are in Greek while the prophets' scrolls proclaim their texts in Bohairic Coptic. The overall effect of the painting is one of poise and balance. This is achieved through the elegant poses of the figures and the stunning palette of pale blue, olive green, white and brown-grey, sparingly punctuated with passages of burnt orange on the garments of the flanking prophets. The heads are carefully modelled and each is outlined and shaded in white. The scene is set against a deep blue ground, which changes to olive green between the Virgin and Gabriel. It is offset by a border of floral scrolls, highlighted and banded with burnt orange, which, despite being damaged along the lower rim of the semidome, contributes to the overall affect of richness. Unusually, it is a wax technique that is used, in contrast to the rest of the painting.⁶ The encaustic technique was known from its earlier use in Fayyum portraits and icons. It was also used in monumental painting, as in the two scenes in encaustic on marble revetment covering the pilasters on either side of the apse at the monastery church of St. Catherine's at Sinai. Depicting the Sacrifice of Isaac and the Sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, these paintings are attributed to the seventh-century.⁷ Contemporary with, and related to, the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation, I propose, is the group of haloed heads of the

6. Dr. M. Wuttman (paper at the Paris *Table ronde* cited in note 1 above) points out that the floral border was painted on the same plaster level separately from the rest in its different, wax, technique.

7. G.H. Forsyth and K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Church and Fortress of Justinian* (Ann Arbor 1973) 16-17 with, respectively, pls. CXXX and CXXXI and details.

seated twenty four Elders of the Apocalypse from the sanctuary of Benjamin at the nearby Dayr Abu Makar, in the Wadi al-Natrūn, which were painted in encaustic on wooden roundels and attached to the figures.⁸ One of these (fig. 9) now in the Landesmuseum in Mainz, compares closely with the head of the Virgin at Dayr al-Suryān (fig. 3), suggesting the hand of the same artist. It shares the rounded face with a palid skin tone with the heavily outlined eye and eyebrow. Similar shading extends from the area above the eye down both sides of the nose. The bridge across the nose, the fleshy mouth, and modelling around the cheeks is common to both.

The recovery of the Annunciation was made by Prof. Paul van Moorsel and members of the French Institute in Cairo, in May 1991 and their results were published soon after.⁹ This involved the removal of the painted layer above the Annunciation, depicting the Ascension, blackened in a fire in the church in 1988. The first priority was to conserve and remove what remained of the Ascension of the upper layer before the Annunciation could be fully revealed beneath.¹⁰ It had long been known that an earlier painted layer existed under the Ascension. In 1901 Josef Strzygowski referred to fragments revealed through broken patches in the upper layer.¹¹

8. For the twenty four Elders at Dayr Abu Makar: J. Leroy, *Les peintures des couvents du Ouadi Natroun* (l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, Mémoires, CI, (Cairo, 1982), 21-26 with Diagram A, figs. 2-3 and pls. 8-18. For the panels taken by Prince Johann Georg zu Sachsen to Dresden and now in the Landesmuseum in Mainz see J.G. zu Sachsen, *Streifzüge durch die Kirchen und Klöster Aegyptens* (Leipzig 1914) 69-70 with figs. 225-26 and Leroy, *Ouadi Natroun*, 25 with fig. 4, who does not, however, discuss the technique. My observation is made on the basis of the painted heads viewed at Mainz, but this has not been verified by technical analysis. I plan to argue the twelfth-century dating for the Dayr Abu Makar painted programme in more detail elsewhere.

9. P. van Moorsel, 'Deir as Sourian Revisted', *Nubian Letters* 17 (Leiden, 1992), 1-13, with Arabic summary, 14-16. P. van Moorsel, 'Une Annonciation faite à Marie au Monastère des Syriens (Une découverte de l'I.F.A.O., faite en mai 1991)', lecture delivered June 1991, published in the *Bulletin de la Société Française d'Égyptologie* 124 (June 1992) 5-23.

10. M. Wuttman's report, *Mission d'Étude et de Restauration des Peintures Coptes au Wadi-Natroun/Rapport sur les travaux effectués en mai 1991 à Deir-Amba Bischoi et Deir el-Sourian*, I.F.A.O., (Cairo, 15 July 1991) 6-7 and 9-12 is cited by Van Moorsel, 'Une Annonciation' 10, 12-13, 15-16.

11. Notably parts of an angel carrying a staff, a bearded male head and the nimbus of another head next to it: J. Strzygowski, 'Der Schmuck der älteren el-Hadrakirche im syrischen Kloster der sketischen Wüste', *Oriens Christianus* 1 (1901) 362-63.

These fragments were further documented by Leroy and members of the French Institute working in the early 1970s.¹²

The overpainting of the Annunciation with the Ascension was undertaken in c. 1225, at the same time as scenes of the Annunciation/Nativity (fig. 8) and the Dormition, respectively in the southern and northern semidomes of the church's eastern sanctuary.¹³ The fact that the inscriptions of the later painting are in Syriac with Coptic, in place of the Coptic with Greek of the lower Annunciation, suggests that the Syrians had replaced the Copts in the ascendancy at the monastery by this time. This raises the issue of the multicultural character of the monastery, shared between the two communities.

The Monastery of the Syrians

The monastery was founded by the Copts in the sixth century as an adjunct to another in the Wadi al-Natrūn, Dayr Anba Bishoi, and rebuilt with it by the Patriarch Benjamin in 645. In the Church of the Virgin (figs. 6-7), the north and south semidomes were already incorporated into the plan of the Church of the Virgin at this rebuilding of 645. But, as Peter Grossmann has recently shown, the western semidome was added at a later date, when a pair of corner piers replaced the two original columns which divided the nave from the western return aisle.¹⁴ In the ninth century the monastery was acquired by Syrians from Takrit from the Coptic patriarch as a

12. Leroy also noted trees at the top of the scene which he described as 'un paysage feuillu': Leroy, *Ouadi Natroun* 72 with pl. 128 (P.-H. Lafférière's copy).

13. For the three upper paintings see H.G. Evelyn White, *Monasteries of the Wādi 'n Natrūn III: the Architecture and Archaeology* (New York, 1933), 190-193; J. Leroy, 'Le Décor de l'Église du Couvent des Syriens au Ouadi Natroun (Égypte)', *Cahiers archéologiques* 23 (1974), 162-67; Leroy, *Ouadi Natroun* 61-74 and 117, where he dates them generally to the late twelfth/early thirteenth century. L.-A. Hunt, 'Christian-Muslim Relations in Painting in Egypt of the Twelfth to mid-Thirteenth Centuries: Sources of Wallpainting at Deir es-Suriani and the Illustration of the New Testament MS Paris Copte-Arabe 1/Cairo, Bibl. 94' *Cahiers archéologiques* 33 (1985) 117-125, 142, dates them c. 1225. This has been accepted by Van Moorsel, 'Deir es-Souriani revisited' 6. Van Moorsel, 'Une Annonciation', 18 posits the existence of a painting below the Dormition, but he has informed me that since the upper layer is stable there are no plans to remove the sanctuary semidome paintings.

14. Peter Grossmann, 'Neue Beobachtungen zur al-Adrā' Kirche von Dair as-Suryān', *Nubian Letters* 19 (1993), 1-8, with Abb. 1, 2 A-B.

permanent home for Syrian monks in the Wadi al-Natrūn. The first half of the tenth century saw a high point in the monastery's history, under the abbot Moses of Nisibis. It remained predominantly in Syrian hands until the late seventeenth century, although shared with the Copts for several centuries before that time.¹⁵ This coexistence is particularly relevant here, with the shift in emphasis from Greek/Coptic to Syriac/Coptic between the two painted layers. Recently, Monica Blanchard has pointed up the Syrian element in the inscriptions of the upper layer, suggesting the primacy of the Syrian community at this time, in the early thirteenth century.¹⁶ This is suggestive of a competitive element at play between the two communities. In line with recent work in social psychology, it is appropriate to look at each minority group's sense of identity on its terms in relation to the communities with which it interacts.¹⁷ During the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries the monastery was thriving and had influxes of monks from Syria in 1194 and 1206.¹⁸ Those who came in 1194 clearly made an impact on the cultural activity of the monastery, including making repairs to the library. It is likely that this represented a reassertion of authority on the part of the Syrians and a semi-retreat by the Copts, whose earlier painted decoration had in its day articulated their own concerns.

15. For the history of the monastery see: H.G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wādi 'n Natrūn Part II: The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis* (New York 1932) 309-321, 414-416; Evelyn White, *Architecture and Archaeology* 169-71. Leroy, *Ouadi Natroun* 53-60, traced the history of the monastery but (54 with note 3) pointed out that the entire nature of the transfer — apart from the fact that a large sum of money changed hands — remains obscure.

16. M.J. Blanchard, 'The Syriac Inscriptions on the Paintings in the Church of the Virgin of the Monastery of the Syrians (Deir es Souriani)' *Sixteenth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference: Abstracts of Papers* The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland, October 26-28 (1990) 12-13 focused on the Syriac context of the paintings through their inscriptions.

17. See, for example, the approach of N. Hutnik, *Ethnic Minority Identity: A Social Psychological Perspective* (Oxford 1992) in discussing minority-majority ethnic relations.

18. Evelyn White, *History of the Monasteries* 383.

The Problem of Dating

The problem of the painting's date must be addressed as the basis for discussion of its distinctive iconography of prophecy and Annunciation. A variety of suggestions have been made. Karel C. Innemée has proposed an early eighth century date.¹⁹ Van Moorsel (following Leroy's view) has tentatively dated it to the abbacy of Moses of Nisibis, during the first half of the 10th century.²⁰ I previously proposed, on the basis of the small fragments then visible through broken patches in the plaster, that the lower painting was undertaken only ten-to-fifteen years earlier than the Ascension.²¹ I now believe the timespan between the phases to have been longer and that a date in the late twelfth century, probably the 1170s-early 1180s, is compatible with its vivid typological imagery and elegant style.

Van Moorsel has convincingly identified the iconography with hymns to the Virgin.²² It is indeed veneration to the Virgin through the liturgy that provides the key to 'reading' the scene. But the scene arguably belongs to the wider development of Marian imagery in the twelfth century for which parallels must be adduced beyond Egypt. This demands a frame of reference in icon, manuscript and wallpainting in the eastern Mediterranean in the later twelfth century. The Annunciation was painted at a time when contacts beyond Egypt

19. Innemée's summary is forthcoming (see note 1). There are, however, no parallels with painting elsewhere to justify this dating. While the Annunciation appears amongst the frescoes at Castelseprio of the late eighth to early tenth centuries, it does not display any of the distinctive features under discussion. In fact Leveto, 'Marian Theme' 393-413 argues that Mary as the symbol of the Church is the focal theme there. Innemée's dating is taken, with no good evidence, by Grossmann, 'Neue Beobachtungen' 4, to apply to the building of this church.

20. Van Moorsel, 'Deir es-Souriani Revisited' 11. For reference to Leroy's view, see above, note 12.

21. In particular the head of the figure on the Virgin's right — now known to be the prophet Isaiah — is comparable with Peter's in the scene of the Disciples at the Tomb in the Greek Gospel book in Berlin, Staatsbibl. gr. qu. 66, dateable to the late twelfth to early thirteenth century and in Egypt by 1219: Hunt, 'Christian-Muslim Relations' 120-21, with fig. 26 and note 76. For discussion of MS Berlin gr. qu. 66, and previous bibliography, see A.W. Carr, *Byzantine Illumination 1150-1250: The Study of a Provincial Tradition* (Chicago and London 1987) 212-214 and 94 where she dates the manuscript 'a full decade' before 1219.

22. Van Moorsel, 'Deir es-Souriani Revisited' 9, 11. See further below, note 62.

were strong and there was an openness to new ideas and artistic developments. This was made possible both through the political climate of the early Ayyubid period and through the relative proximity of Dayr al-Suryān to the Orthodox monastery of St. Catherine, as well as to the Mediterranean seaports of Alexandria and Damietta, with their outlets to Cyprus, Byzantium and the West. But the painting should not be viewed as a slavish copy of Christian art elsewhere: it can only be understood as expressive of debate within Egypt itself.

The Virgin approached by Gabriel

The Virgin, enveloped in garments of pale blue, is spinning the purple wool for the veil of the temple, according to the apocryphal version, and is seated on a high-backed throne at the centre of the scene. Her left hand is raised in a delicate gesture, with the finger tips just brushing the lower left cheek. In this hand she holds a spindle, the staff of which is just visible to the right of her halo in detailed photographs (figs. 2,3), with the thread passing through her fingers. Her right hand is extended, the palm outward, in acceptance of her fate. Although facing the viewer and almost seated frontally, her left leg is swivelled towards the angel. The angel wears the same pale blue as the Virgin, over a white undergarment, and his wings are green. Gabriel approaches the Virgin from her left in almost a side-step, his confident pose two-thirds facing the viewer while his head is turned towards the Virgin. The prominence given to Gabriel reflects his status in the Coptic church tradition, in which he is particularly venerated as the bringer of good news.²³ His Greek inscription is illegible: the expected name 'Gabriel' cannot be made out. He holds a cross-staff in his right hand while gesturing towards the Virgin as he delivers his message. This is the Greek text of Luke 1:28,

χε —		χαῖρε
ρε και —	i.e. (lege)	κεχαριτωμένη
χαριτο —		ὁ κύριος
ΜΕΝΗ Ω Κ —		μετὰ σοῦ
υῖος ■ —		
ετα cov	(sic)	

23. Gabriel is the most venerated angel after Michael: C.D.G. Müller, *Die Engellehre der koptischen Kirche* (Wiesbaden 1959) 40.

('Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women'). It is written in white against a green ground, in front of the angel's forward leg, between him and the Virgin. Both the Virgin and Gabriel wear dotted halos, as do the prophets. This is a prominent twelfth- to thirteenth-century feature.²⁴

As a starting point in locating the Annunciation in the twelfth century one may cite Lydia Hadermann-Misguich's summary that 'au XII^e siècle, les éléments les plus typiques sont la Vierge assise filant-ou venant de s'arrêter de filer-, l'ange courant, la colombe de l'Esprit saint descendant d'un segment de ciel, et des architectures plus ou moins élaborées, abritant parfois un jardin suspendu' with the Virgin no longer gesticulating but merely raising her opened right hand in surprise and fear.²⁵ With the exception of the dove, which does not appear, all these features as represented at Dayr al-Suryān correspond to Annunciations in Byzantine art from the mid-late twelfth century.

Although reversed, the type of the seated spinning Virgin turning towards the approaching angel with architecture behind can be paralleled in an Annunciation in the Vatican manuscript of the Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos (fig. 10) of the 1140s-early 50s.²⁶ The addition of the trees, issuing from the garden of the Virgin's house, has precedents around the same time. A shrub

24. For example, the early twelfth-century paintings of the Virgin Blachernitissa in Asinou and in Trikomo: D. Winfield, 'Hagios Chrysostomos, Trikomo, Asinou, Byzantine painters at Work', *Πρακτικά του Πρώτου Διεθνούς Κυπριολογικού Συνεδρίου* (Nicosia 14-19 April 1969) II (Nicosia 1972) 288, pl. LX: 1,2, as noted by E. Cruikshank Dodd, 'The Monastery of Mar Musa Al-Habashi, near Nebek, Syria' *Arte Medievale* II ser., Anno VI no. 2 (1992) 119 with note 43 with reference to dotted halos at the thirteenth-century Syrian church of Sts. Sergios and Bacchos at Qara. Numerous examples of dotted halos appear in icon painting of the Crusader period, such as those reproduced in K. Weitzmann, 'Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom', *DOP* 20 (1966), 49-83 reproduced in K. Weitzmann, *Studies in the Arts at Sinai* (Princeton 1982) no. XII, 325-386.

25. L. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo. Les fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XII^e siècle* 2 Vols. (Brussels 1975) 99.

26. Vat. gr. 1162, fol. 118r: J.C. Anderson, 'The Illustrated Sermons of James the Monk: Their Dates, Order, and Place in the History of Byzantine Art' *Viator* 22 (1991) 90 gives this date for the Vatican manuscript which, he argues, copies the Paris version (B.N. gr. 1208). Anderson argues (103) that buildings as units connected by a wall is a common device in Byzantine MS painting of the eleventh-twelfth centuries.

dominates the cluster of buildings comprising the Virgin's house to the right of the Virgin of the Annunciation on the face of the eastern arch at the Cappella Palatina in the 1140s.²⁷ The flowering shrub also makes its appearance in the Annunciation accompanying St. Luke's portrait in the Codex Ebnerianus (Oxford, Auct. T. inf. 1.10) in the mid-century.²⁸ Closer still is the tree sprouting from the Virgin's house accompanying the scene of the Annunciation, one of the feasts in an icon of the Deisis with apostles and the twelve feasts.²⁹ The 'hanging garden' imagery becomes more elaborate at the end of the century. In one instance, the left wing of a tetrptych at Sinai with feast scenes and Church fathers, willowy trees with the Virgin's house are displayed.³⁰ The scene at Kurbinovo of 1191 is a significant parallel, with its walled garden (fig. 14), as will be discussed later.³¹ Finally, the famous late twelfth century Sinai Annunciation icon, attributed to a Constantinopolitan painter (fig. 21), shares another feature with the wallpainting.³² This is the ornate high-backed throne, with the Virgin's feet resting on an arcaded footstool.

The elaborate imagery suggests, then, that the Annunciation was painted in the second half of the twelfth century. The dating can, I believe, be narrowed down to the 1170s-early 1180s both on stylistic

27. O. Demus, *The Mosaics of Sicily* (London 1949) 213-4 with pl. 12 reproduced here. E. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic: The Royal Programmes of Norman Sicily (1130-1187)* (Oxford 1990) 25 with pl. 18.

28. Codex Ebnerianus fol. 118v: I. Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturen-handchriften* (Stuttgart 1977) nr. 39, 63 with pl. 238. Other examples are Athos Dionysiou MS 587 fol. 150 conveniently reproduced in Maguire, *Art and Eloquence* fig. 36 and London, B.L. Harley 1810 fol. 142r: Carr, *Byzantine Illumination* no. 70, 251-2 with colour reproduction fiche 6 F.10.

29. G. and M. Soteriou, *Icons du Mont Sinai* Vol. I (Athens 1956) (Plates) pl. 57. II (Athens 1958) (Text in Greek with French summary) 75-77. (The icon is here dated too early: late eleventh or early twelfth century).

30. D. Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th century' in K.A. Manafis (ed.), *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Athens 1990) 108 with fig. 28.

31. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo* 102 fig. 37; Maguire, *Art and Eloquence* 48.

32. K. Weitzmann, 'Eine spätbyzantinische Verkündigungssikone des Sinai und die zweite byzantinische Welle des 12. Jahrhunderts', in G. von Osten and G. Kauffmann (eds.), *Festschrift Herbert von Einem* (Berlin 1965) reproduced in Weitzmann, *Studies* no. X, 271-289; Mouriki, 'Icons' 107-108, with fig. 29.

as well as liturgical and historical grounds. The style is 'Comnene', with an element of solidity introduced in the heavy outlining of the figures and the use of parallel lines to articulate drapery folds. The use of orange produces a strongly contrasting use of colour. Long looping folds are a feature. The Virgin's garment curves over her arms, falling to wrap over her right knee. Zig-zag folds fall over her right knee paralleled by those sweeping diagonally from Gabriel's forward to his backward knee and those falling from his inner left arm down his back. Crinkled curved loops also flick up at his hem. Shared with the prophets is the bunched-up drapery around Gabriel's waist above a looping V in parallel lines. Several of these features (together with the Virgin's outward-facing palm) occur in the Annunciation at the Martorana in Palermo, dateable within the time-span of 1143-51.³³ But they continue until later in the century, as in an Annunciation amongst scenes of the Life of the Virgin and the twelve feasts on a Sinai iconostasis beam (fig. 13) later in the century.³⁴ At the later end of the dating spectrum, the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation must have been painted before the 1190s. While the style is 'Comnene' not all the developments that took place right at the end of the century are represented here. There is little of the 'mannerism' of Annunciations of the very end of the century. The frenetic energy and exaggerated drapery folds of the angel that can be seen developing at the Enclistra of Neophytos (1183), and furthered at Kurbinovo (fig. 15), Lagoudera and Kastoria, as well as the Sinai icon (fig. 14), are absent from Gabriel at Dayr al-Suryān.³⁵ Furthermore, the angel does not twist around, almost turning his back to the viewer as the 'self-conscious' angel at

33. E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of St. Mary's of the Admiral in Palermo* (Washington D.C. 1990) 174 (with note 169). His dating is given, 16.

34. Mouriki, 'Icons' 156 with colour fig. 25 dates it to the last quarter of the century.

35. For the Annunciation at the Enclistra: C. Mango and E. Hawkins, 'The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and its Wall Paintings' *DOP* 20 (1966) 119-206 with plates; the Annunciation is discussed, 168-69, 194, with fig. 73 (angel); R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons* (London 1985) 238 with fig. 92. For the connections between the Enclistra and Lagoudera see Hadermann-Misguich *Kurbinovo*, 39 with note 61 and figs. 38-39. See also A. and J.A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* (London 1985) 161-62 with fig. 87 (angel). *Kurbinovo*: Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 96-103, figs. 36-37 and pl. B, with comments, 39.

Lagoudera (1192), in the Sinai icon (fig. 21) and in Berlin MS gr. qu. 66 (fig. 17), the latter of the early years of the thirteenth century and itself in Egypt by 1219.³⁶

Striking is the balance between the Virgin and Gabriel which gives them an intimacy. The two function very much as a pair, bound by the architecture behind them. The Virgin does not recoil in fear at the presence of the angel, as frequently in Byzantine Annunciation scenes, but sits in a relaxed fashion, her left knee towards the angel, more in the pose of the western Bride of Christ. There is no disjuncture between the two figures: the diagonal of the angel's right wing joins the two figures together in a visual curve that continues from the diagonal of the angel's upper garment, stretching to his forward knee. Similar balance and parity occurs with the pairing of the Virgin and Christ in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin, such as that sculpted on the west portal at Senlis, to c. 1170 (fig. 20).³⁷

Incense Imagery

Liturgical and historical factors support the dating of the painting to the 1170s-80s. At the dead centre of the lower rim of the apse between Mary and Gabriel, is a highly suggestive piece of imagery, a censer placed on a column lit with a blue flame that curls sinuously around the white inscription, mirroring and almost touching the curve of the Virgin's knee (fig. 1). Van Moorsel points to a Coptic Hymn with the phrase 'The fine incense of your virginity, Virgin Mary, rose more still than that of the Cherubim and Seraphim up to the throne of the Father.'³⁸ Discussion can be extended to the Liturgy

36. H. Maguire, 'The Self-Conscious Angel: Character Study in Byzantine Painting of the Annunciation', *Byzantine Studies Conference: Abstracts of Papers* 8 (October 15-17 1982) University of Chicago (Chicago 1982) 30-31. For MS gr. qu. 66's presence in Egypt in 1219 see the comments of O. Rössler on the added dedicatory inscription in R. Hamann-Maclean, 'Der Berliner Codex Graecus Quarto 66 und seine nächste Verwandten als Beispiele des Stilwandels im frühen 13. Jahrhundert', *Studien zur Buchmalerei und Goldschmiedekunst des Mittelalters*, Festschrift für K.H. Usener (Marburg 1967) 244ff, Abb. 41.

37. M.F. Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture* (Oxford 1981) 216 with pl. 157; Schöne Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin* 52-53.

38. Van Moorsel, 'Deir es Souriani Revisited', 9 with note 17.

itself. In the Liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites reference is made during the censuring (during the Mass of the Catechumens) to 'the blessed root that budded forth and sprang up out of a dry ground, even of Mary, and all the earth was filled with the savour of its glorious sweetness.'³⁹ Christ is beseeched to accept the incense on behalf of mankind for the remission of sins. Over the altar, adoration is offered up to the Trinity. The censuring continues with the prayer to remember the Virgin, the holy prophets, apostles and martyrs, priests and the righteous and the church itself.⁴⁰ Furthermore, it is known from the writers Denys bar Salibi in the twelfth, and Bar Hebraeus in the thirteenth century, that the censuring, undertaken during Sundays and feast days, was completed with a tour around the church.⁴¹ This circuit took the priest or deacon anticlockwise from the altar via the north side of the church to the west end and then back up the south side. The Annunciation in the western conch could, then, have functioned within the Liturgy itself. Censuring also took place in the Liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites and the censer, shown at the base of the Annunciation scene, is alluded to in the chant accompanying the offering of incense: 'This is the censer of pure gold bearing the sweet spice that was in the hands of Aaron the priest while he offered ■ sweet savour upon the altar.'⁴²

The incense imagery functions as a sign of the practice of intercessionary prayer, as well as a symbol of Mary's virginity. The rôle of incense in intercessionary prayer is an essential feature of Jacobite eastern Christian church worship and the painting arguably played a part in that process. The smoke from the burning incense wends its way up with the prayer for forgiveness of sins before the Liturgy. It had other uses too: purification of the church in preparation for the mass and the driving away of disease in particular.⁴³ But it is

39. F.E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (Oxford 1896) 74.

40. Brightman, *Liturgies* 76-77.

41. A. Cody, 'L'Office divin chez les Syriens Jacobites', *Proche Orient Chrétien* 19 (1969) 315-6, with note 48.

42. Brightman, *Liturgies* 150.

43. See, respectively, A.A. King, *The Rites of Eastern Christendom* Vol. 1 (Vatican 1947) 349; Brightman, *Liturgies* 74. The most comprehensive general discussion of incense in the liturgy remains E.G.C.F. Atchley, *A History of the Use of Incense in Divine Worship* (London 1909).

above all the veneration to the Virgin as the Mother of God and intercessor for mankind, as well as the devotion to her through the sensual, even erotic, associations of the smell of incense, that are important here.⁴⁴

It should be emphasised that this incense imagery is unique within medieval Coptic painting. This indicates that it should be located at a particular time rather than being generally suggestive of the use of incense within the liturgy. I propose that the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation was painted in accord with the practice adopted in the Coptic church, in the second half of the twelfth century, to embrace a common public confession of sins during the censuring at the beginning of the Liturgy for sacramental confession, in place of individual, private confession. This practice was officially recognised, argued Georg Graf, by John, the 74th Coptic Patriarch (1189-1216), clearing up an issue that had been in flux since the mid-century.⁴⁵ Individual confession was replaced with the general avowal of sin by the faithful as part of the liturgy. The change did not go unopposed. The dissident priest Mark Ibn al-Kanbar defended the traditional teaching of the church on the grounds of apostolic and monastic tradition, as well as the teaching of the Fathers.⁴⁶ He was excommunicated for his

44. The Ethiopic Liturgy, dependent on the Coptic, is particularly extravagant in its development of the incense imagery of the Virgin. The plea is made to her, as mother and queen, to intercede with Christ for the remission of sins, as in the following extracts, collated from seventeenth-century Ethiopic manuscripts of the Jacobite mass (Brightman, *Liturgies*, 217): 'This is the time of blessing, this is the time of choice incense, the time of the praise of our Saviour, lover of man, Christ. The incense is Mary: the incense is he who was in her womb which is fragrant: the incense is he whom she bare: he came and saved us, the fragrant ointment Jesus Christ. O come let us worship him and keep his commandments that he forgive us our sins. . . The fragrant ointment is Mary: for he that was in her womb, who is more fragrant than any incense, came and was made flesh of her. In Mary Virgin pure the Father was wellpleased and he decked her for a tabernacle for the habitation of his well-beloved son.'

45. G. Graf, *Ein Reformversuch innerhalb der koptischen Kirche im zwölften Jahrhundert* (Collectanea Hierosolymitana Bd. 2) (Paderborn 1923) 51-52, refutes the view of Renaudot, cited by others (e.g., later, E. Cerulli, *Etiopi in Palestina* I (1943) 54) that this official recognition took place under John V (1146-1166) and Mark III (1166-89). Either way, it is safe to assume that the issue must have been in flux throughout the period between the 1140s-1180s.

46. For Ibn al-Kanbar's position and theology see Graf, *Reformversuch*, 38-71.

beliefs on this issue and others by the patriarch Mark III. Mark III appealed in 1179 to the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Michael I (1166-99) on the issue of Ibn al-Kanbar's views on confession and the judgement went against Ibn al-Kanbar.⁴⁷ The matter eventually died down. But the fact that this was a contentious issue in the latter part of the twelfth century explains why it was spelt out in the Annunciation scene here. Even the ingredients from which incense was to be made were a matter for debate, with its main component signifying the Cross.⁴⁸ Support for Ibn al-Kanbar's views was centred in Lower Egypt, in which the Wadi al-Natrûn lies, and the monks probably felt beholden to make a statement on the matter. Since the monks of the Wadi al-Natrûn monasteries regarded themselves as the upholders of orthodox liturgical thought and practice, this painting should be read as making a definitive statement in favour of the official church view. The painting must, therefore, date before Ibn al-Kanbar's death in 1208 and probably nearer to the time when the issue was at its height. This was between the 1170s-80s, when judgement was made against Ibn al-Kanbar and the church's view made final. This is compatible with the dating on stylistic grounds.

The Prophets

The prophets, with scrolls, are arranged around the angel announcing to the Virgin, the core of the scene (figs. 1,2,4). Isaiah and Ezekiel, directly on either side, turn in on the central pair reinforcing their message with their blessing gesture, apparently comprising the Latin gesture with the first two fingers raised and the other two held down with the thumb.⁴⁹ The outer pair, Moses on the left opposite Daniel on the right, are, by contrast, on their way out of the frame, turning back almost as an afterthought. Their gestures are kept to themselves, their hands cupped to their chests.

47. J.B. Chabot (ed. and trans.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien* 4 Vols. (Paris, 1899-1910) IV, 720; trans. III, 379-80. Michael, in Jerusalem at the time, received disputations from both sides. Following the judgement Ibn al-Kanbar attached himself to the Chalcedonian Greeks (Melkites).

48. Graf, *Reformversuch* 110-114.

49. On the question of blessings see Cruikshank Dodd, 'Nebek' 123-24.

The prophets are named at their feet in Greek, while their prophecies are in Bohairic Coptic, written on scrolls.⁵⁰ The prophecies represent a biblical typology of the Virgin found in Marian hymnography, homilies and liturgical canons of all the eastern churches, although less systematically studied in the Coptic and Syrian as in the Byzantine. These confirm the prophets' rôle as prophesying or witnessing the Incarnation.

Pride of place is given to Isaiah, on the Virgin's right (Ἡσαΐας ὁ προφήτης). His scroll, in Coptic, yields the expected text of Isaiah 7:14 (= Matt. 1:23), 'Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.' This, in Elizabeth Brière's words, is the 'supreme prophesy of the virgin birth of the saviour' read at the Byzantine feast of the Nativity, at Christmas (25 December), rather than the feast of the Annunciation (25 March) which grew out of it in the sixth century.⁵¹ While the term 'Emmanuel' refers to the nature of God, the prophecy as a whole anticipates Christ as Saviour.

Ezekiel (Ἐζεκιήλ ὁ προφήτης), standing behind Gabriel on the right side of the conch, raises his index finger in tandem with Isaiah's raised hand. His prophecy is the text of Ezekiel 44:2 'Then said the Lord unto me; This gate shall be shut, it may not be opened.' This is the end of the reading (Ezek. 43:27-44:4) read at Vespers I at the Orthodox feast of the Annunciation, referring to the Virgin Mother of God and thus to the Incarnation.⁵² Homilies too would have played their part, translated from Greek into Coptic for use in Egypt.

50. Van Moorsel, 'Deir es Sourian Revisited' 9-10. I am grateful to Dr. L. MacCoull for checking these inscriptions. Van Moorsel, 'Deir es Sourian Revisited' points out that the Coptic versions are 'free'. However it has been pointed out to me by Dr. S. Brock that several versions were in circulation in the eastern churches. All these inscriptions are in black excepting the name of Moses, which is written in white behind him, against the blue background.

51. E. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography: a study of some feasts of the Orthodox Church* D.Phil thesis (Oxford University, 1982) Abstract, 178, 201-2. I am grateful to Dr. S. Brock for reference to this work.

52. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography*, 180, 183. G. Babić, 'L'Image symbolique de la "Porte Fermée" à Saint-Clement d'Ochrid', A. Grabar et. al., *Synthronon: Art et Archéologie de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age* (Paris 1968) 145-51.

An example is the homily of Proclus Bishop of Cizicus and later patriarch of Constantinople, on the Incarnation, preached on the day of the festival of the Nativity. This is preserved in an Ethiopian version, parallel to, or via, a Coptic translation, and concerns the incorruptibility of Christ: 'As He entered the womb without corruptible matter, so was He produced, and so was He conceived. He came in without corruptible matter, even as Ezekiel the prophet saith, "He brought me by way of the gate of saints, outside the door which looketh towards the east, and it was closed. And God said unto me, Son of Man, this gate is closed, and it shall not be opened. And no one shall go in through it except the God of Israel. He alone shall go in through it, and come out from it, and it shall remain closed." Behold, then, the true and open testimony concerning the holy God-bearer Mary.'⁵³

Moses (ΜΩΥΣΗΣ Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ) stands next to Isaiah, at the left of the scene. His prophecy is a variant of Exodus 3:2b, 'I saw the bush burnt with fire, and it was not consumed.'⁵⁴ This is the nub of the text of Exodus 3:1-8 read at Vespers II at the feast of the Annunciation in the Orthodox Church.⁵⁵ The Burning Bush, a common title of the Virgin Theotokos, appears in Orthodox hymns.⁵⁶ Moses with the Burning Bush is frequently depicted on icons, and in the Egyptian context is paralleled in a miniature painted, also arguably in the twelfth century, over a colophon in the Coptic Pentateuch MS Vat. Copto 1 (fig. 18). This manuscript is from the nearby monastery of Dayr Abu Makar. In the miniature Moses stands bearing a scroll, accompanied by the Burning Bush. Also painted into the same manuscript

53. E. A. Wallis Budge, *Coptic Homilies in the Dialect of Upper Egypt (edited from the papyrus Codex Or. 5001 in the British Museum)* (London 1910) 404-5. The passage quotes from Ezekiel 44:1-3.

54. Moses at the Cappella Palatina in Palermo also displays this variant from the Septuagint, which replaces 'He' with 'I'. Borsook, *Cappella Palatina* 46 note 84 attributes this to the Greek being a translation from the Vulgate.

55. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography* 180 (present readings).

56. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography* 188.

is an icon of the Virgin and Child, surrounded by the springtime image of sprouting foliage.⁵⁷

Finally, on the right of the apse stands Daniel (ΔΑΝΙΗΛ Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ). In Persian dress, with short tunic, leggings, long cloak and peaked cap, he displays the text of Daniel 2:34, 'Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands.' This, Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, provides an evocative image of the Mother of God as the mountain uncut, as it appears in Orthodox hymns.⁵⁸ This was regarded in Christian exegesis as a type of the Incarnation. John of Damascus wrote in his first homily on the Dormition of the Virgin: 'What is this mountain of Daniel, from which the cornerstone, Christ, was detached without the intervention of a human instrument? Was it not you who conceived without impregnation and always remained a Virgin?'⁵⁹ In the text of Psalm 67 [68]:16 too, the mountain or hill is also interpreted as an attribute of the Virgin.⁶⁰

The prophecies all proclaim Mary's virginity. The imagery refers to the Burning Bush, the closed gate, the uncut mountain, all titles of the Mother of God and predominantly 'container' types, evocative and illustrative of Mary's purity as the Mother of God.⁶¹ This typology is common to all the eastern churches and strikingly similar to, and in many respects dependent on, the Byzantine hymn tradition. The Coptic tradition is no exception. Homilies, hymns and liturgies

57. There is some debate about this manuscript and the time at which the paintings were added. K. Weitzmann, 'An Early Copto-Arabic Miniature in Leningrad', *Ars Islamica* 10 (1943) 129-31 with figs. 15-16, dated the MS to the ninth century and believed that the miniatures were added, in Cairo, in the same century. J. Leroy, *Les Manuscrits Coptes et Coptes-Arabs Illustrés* (Paris 1974), 108-110, pl. 98(2) and pl. 98(1), without reference to Weitzmann's article, dated the manuscript to the ninth-tenth centuries and believed the miniatures to have been added in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. My own view is that the miniatures were added in the 12th century, probably at the monastery of Dayr Abu Makar.

58. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography*, 188.

59. PG 96, col. 713B; S. Der Nersessian, 'Program and Iconography of the Frescoes of the Paraclesion' in P. A. Underwood (ed.), *The Kariye Djami Vol. IV: Studies in the Art of the Kariye Djami and Its Intellectual Background* (London 1975) 312 with note 41.

60. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography*, 188. This first finds expression in art in Greek ninth-century Psalters: see Der Nersessian, 'Program and Iconography' 311, with references cited, note 40.

61. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography*, 190.

incorporating this imagery were translated from Greek into Coptic from the fifth/sixth centuries and Greek liturgical manuscripts were retained in use in the monasteries of the Wadi al-Natrūn.⁶²

More important than the prophets individually is the configuration of all four at Dayr al-Suryān and the way they enact a typological rôle with reference to the Incarnation. This can be paralleled quite specifically in an early twelfth-century icon of the Virgin Kykkotissa at Sinai (fig. 12). These same four prophets, with others, are arranged vertically in pairs in compartments on either side of the central Virgin and Child image.⁶³ Several are accompanied by an object functioning as an attribute of the Virgin. Thus second down on the left Moses with the Burning Bush appears next to Aaron. The fourth compartment down on this side has Ezekiel, with the closed door, with David. Fourth on the right is Isaiah with Daniel. Isaiah has a cherubim touching his lips with live coal, symbolising the Eucharist. Daniel, again in Persian dress, stands next to the mountain from which a stone has been detached. Ezekiel and Daniel have the same prophecies, but in Greek, as at Dayr al-Suryān. Also as at Dayr al-Suryān, all these prophets turn inward toward the central image, in this case the Virgin and Child, their hands raised in prophesy. At Dayr al-Suryān the artists of an eastern Christian monastery church are adapting this iconography of the redemptive power of the Incarnation in accordance with their own liturgical requirements.

62. The Coptic version of a homily by Demetrius, Bishop of Antioch on the Birth of Christ and the Virgin Mary has Gabriel praising the Virgin in terms of an arch, a lamp, a golden table, tower, golden vessel, water vessel etc.: see C.D.G. Müller, *Die Alte Koptische Predigt* (Diss. Univ. of Heidelberg 1954) (Berlin 1954) 231-2, who argues that the homily was translated from Greek into Bohairic Coptic in the fifth/sixth centuries. Fourteenth-century fragments of the liturgies of St. Basil and St. Gregory in Greek from the monastery of Dayr Abu Makar include a Hymn to the Theotokos in which the Virgin is termed bush, throne, tabernacle of the Lord, rod, crown, shelter and chariot of God: H.G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'n Natrūn Part I: New Coptic Texts from the Monastery of Saint Macarins* (New York 1926), I, 200, 213. The Liturgy of St. Gregory was arguably used at Dayr al-Suryān, with the Greek/Coptic version ultimately of Syriac origin: see E. Hammerschmidt, *Koptische Gregoriosanaphora* (Berlin 1957) 176-80; *idem*, *Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras* (Berlin 1961) 139. For hymns with this imagery see also, generally, De Lacy O'Leary, *Fragmentary Coptic Hymns from the Wadi 'n Natrun* (London 1924) 51 (XXII: Greek hymn to the Theotokos), 53 (XXXIX: Coptic hymn).

63. Soteriou, *Sinaï*, I figs. 54-56, II, 73-75. Der Nersessian, 'Program and Iconography of Parecclesion' 313. Mouriki, 'Icons' 105 with pl. 19.

A similar typological rôle for these prophets is found elsewhere in monumental art of the twelfth century. Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel are amongst the prophets in mosaic work in the cupola below Christ and angels at the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, around 1143.⁶⁴ Here, although in Greek, all but Ezekiel's prophesy are substantially the same as at Dayr al-Suryān. Again the typology relates to the Incarnation with texts which are found in the Greek liturgies for Christmas and Epiphany.⁶⁵ The Annunciation functions as a pivotal image at the Cappella Palatina, pulling together the strands of its mosaic programme. Located over the arch leading into the main sanctuary and below the central cupola, it functions as a key image of the Incarnation and, with the Presentation opposite, of eucharistic transubstantiation.⁶⁶ The Incarnation is expressed in the Nativity in the southern sanctuary chapel. This scene is accompanied by Isaiah who reappears in the arch spandrel with the text of Matthew 1:23, based on Isaiah 7:14, as used in the Greek Christmas Eve and Christmas Day liturgy.⁶⁷ Given the relationship of the prophets to the scenes of the Annunciation, Nativity and Presentation in the Cappella Palatina programme, it can be speculated that the Nativity and Presentation occupy the lower painted layer of the north and south sanctuary conches at Dayr al-Suryān (fig. 7), painted contemporaneously with the Annunciation under consideration. Byzantine iconography can be seen to be employed in the service of Coptic (and Syriac) rite at Dayr al-Suryān, in parallel with its use in Latin rite at the Cappella Palatina in the twelfth century.

64. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 39-40 for the dating of the mosaics as a whole, with pl. 16 (location of the Annunciation and the prophets of the central cupola with Christ and angels) and colour pl. III (Annunciation).

65. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 41 and 46 note 84. Ezekiel's differs in being Baruch 3:35. The text of Moses' scroll at the Cappella Palatina is included in A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions of Old Testament Prophecies in Byzantine Churches: A Catalogue* (Copenhagen 1979) 78.

66. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 25. The Annunciation also functions as 'the gate of heaven' recognised by Jacob waking from his dream, as the culmination of the Genesis cycle in the nave (Id., 33), and equated with man's return to Paradise.

67. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 34-36.

Nazareth

The Latin verse inscription over the Nativity in the southern sanctuary chapel in the Cappella Palatina draws on imagery of light and flowers, beginning 'Stella parit solem rosa florem forma decorem' ('The star brings forth the sun; rose the flower; comeliness splendour'). This imagery, drawing on the association with illumination and Paradise, is directly related to the Greek Christmas liturgy.⁶⁸ St. Bernard of Clairvaux described Nazareth, the Virgin's home at the time of the Annunciation, as 'flower'.⁶⁹ The setting of the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation is the elaborate townscape of Nazareth. Informed by the twelfth-century context of the Cappella Palatina mosaic programme, it is evident that Nazareth here has acquired connotations of Paradise, with its gates. Moreover, the City of Psalm 86 [87]:3 appears in Orthodox liturgy as a title of the Mother of God.⁷⁰

Nazareth in the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation (figs. 1,2,5) is a walled town with gates, church, tower, central domed structure and walled gardens sprouting trees. These intricately-depicted elements, there for a symbolic purpose, repay close attention. The two main entrance gates, in pale blue, are apparent to the left of the Virgin's halo (with a turreted entrance way), and directly behind Gabriel's head. They are linked by the town wall which is punctuated by square pairs of openings, an arch between the Virgin and Gabriel, and has an arcade or parapet above. The enclosure wall extends at the height of the parapet in a single storey to the right, ending abruptly at the line of Gabriel's back wing, in front of Ezekiel. It extends to the left at the lower storey level, to just in front of Isaiah's halo, with square structures behind it. Inside the right gate is the church (fig. 5).

68. 'Today the Virgin gives birth to the maker of the universe. The cave brings forth Eden, and the star makes known Christ, sun to those in darkness . . . rejoice Jerusalem . . . today the age-old bond of Adam's condemnation has been untied. . . Paradise has been opened to us . . .': quoted by Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 35 with note 142.

69. Bernardo di Chiaravalle, *Lodi della Vergine Maria*, ed. D. Turco (Rome 1984) 43, Sermon 1, 3; Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 35 with note 144.

70. Brière, *Scripture in Hymnography*, 188 (stikhera).

This shows two pedimented facades, both facing front, with the basilica curved in between. Both pediments and the central section are marked with crosses. Behind the church rises a two-storey building with a circular, double fan-shaped roof, also surmounted with a cross. Three supports at its base are shown in this frontal view, suggesting one or more behind. This implies the building might be either square, or polygonal, with a drum at the window level. To the right of it is a walled garden, from which grows a large flourishing tree. The square walled garden is matched by another at the left of the scene, again with a sprouting tree, of which part is now obliterated (fig. 1). A smaller rectangular structure completes the complex to the right.

To the left of the church, raised on a low parapet, are two fluted columns or piers, the left one now almost destroyed (centre of fig. 2). These must originally have supported a structure which was crowned by the circular shape still visible at the top of the exedra, itself surmounted by a cross.⁷¹ Importantly, this cross at the top is directly in line with the flame of incense at the bottom of the painting. The fluted piers as well as the short column at the front supporting the lighted bowl, are all shown delicately sculpted. An arch extends from the left pier and is either linked with, or extends behind, an arched structure, which stands to the right of the walled garden at the left of the complex. The Nazareth buildings are painted grey, brown, beige and green, highlighted in white, with strong shadowing around the doors and windows. The two foremost gates are thrown into perspective in blue and the sprouting trees stand out in strong colours, chestnut brown for the trunk and highlighted green leaves, outlined in red on the left side.

This is surely the most detailed architecturescape to any Eastern Mediterranean Annunciation of the twelfth century, a time when architectural depictions proliferated. This has to be viewed in the broader perspective of Byzantine art. In early Byzantine imagery,

71. See also White, *Monasteries* III 184-5, pl. LVII and Leroy, *Ouadi Natroun*, copy, pl. 126, with the lower level showing through.

the house of the Virgin became assimilated with the church.⁷² In the middle Byzantine period emphasis was placed on the house of the Virgin itself, with the church returning to prominence in the twelfth century. This is then expanded to include not just the house and/or church but other buildings as well, to evoke the town of Nazareth. In citing examples, Hadermann-Misguich pointed to a taste for the picturesque and for familiar detail.⁷³ But taste alone does not fully explain this wealth of detail at Dayr al-Suryān, there for a purpose. While the various elements separately evoke local Umayyad art as well as contemporary, twelfth century, art as a whole they override the literal narrative to propose a vision of salvation based on the typology of the Virgin.

A revival of interest in art of the Umayyad period in the region explains the shape, scale and features of several of the buildings. The block-like structures piled end on end, shaded in white around their square doors and windows, is comparable to mosaic work in Jordan and Palestine. For example, the church with its pair of forward-facing end pediments and tiled basilica between compares with the representation of the town of Nicopolis in mosaic from the Acropolis church at Ma'in, dated 719-20.⁷⁴ The square windows, picked out in white, with vertical shading to differentiate elements of a building, also reappear. The pagoda-like roof of the tower, as well as the pair of fluted columns and the arched gateway, are all to be found in the cluster of buildings amongst the mosaics of the early eighth-century mosaics of the Great Mosque in Damascus, representing a central pavilion, houses with trees, and a gateway (fig. 19).⁷⁵ The modern, western eye tends to focus on the figural representation to the detriment of the architectural in a scene. But, as at Damascus, the architecture

72. For example in the sixth-century mosaic of the Annunciation at Poreč: see G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVI siècles* (Paris 1916) 88-89; Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 101 with note 247.

73. Annunciations at the Cappella Palatina, St. Nicholas Kasnitsi at Castoria, Lagoudera and Kurbinovo: Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 102.

74. M. Piccirillo, *I Mosaici di Giordania* Catalogue of an exhibition held at the Castello di Malpaga, Cavernago-Bergamo, March-June 1991 (Jerusalem 1991) 151, pl. 5.5. Similar pediments, with the 'bending' of the central element of the building, appear in the sixth-century Madaba 'map': see Piccirillo, *Mosaici*, 34-36, fig. 17 and 39 fig. 18.

75. Reproduced in colour in R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (London 1977) 27.

at Dayr al-Suryān has an imagery and symbolism of its own, and in no way functions simply as an architectural 'backdrop'.

The architecture is comparable to that in the Annunciation at Lagoudera of 1192 in its attention to detail (fig. 16), especially in the inclusion of the open-sided gallery or arcade.⁷⁶ A similar silhouette effect of earth colours is also employed, including brown and grey, offset by white.⁷⁷ Another point of comparison is the consistent appearance of buildings seen straight on, without any extensive use of perspective. This is in tune with earlier work in the twelfth century, such as the Cappella Palatina in Palermo.⁷⁸ The effect of the layering of buildings, placed one behind another, as directly behind the angel here (figs. 1,2) reappears in the Presentation to the Virgin at Lagoudera.⁷⁹

A.H.S. Megaw speculated as to whether there was any attempt at depicting real buildings in the architectural paintings at Lagoudera. He concluded that 'no more than a very general relationship can be claimed between these representations of architecture and actual Byzantine structures of the twelfth century' but noted that the loggia design, horseshoe arch and window balustrading had a basis in Cypriot architecture.⁸⁰ A similar conclusion was reached several years ago by Richard Krautheimer in his discussion of representations of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, namely that recognisable features of a famous and sacred building could be picked out for symbolic purposes but there was no conception of 'realism' in the modern sense.⁸¹ This interpretation can equally be applied to the buildings

76. The scene is divided between the north-east and south-east pendentives in the church: A.H.S. Megaw, 'Background Architecture in the Lagoudera Frescoes', *JÖB* 21 (1972), 195-201.

77. Blue in the case of the Presentation of the Virgin at Lagoudera is especially comparable: Megaw, 'Background Architecture', 196.

78. Demus, *The Mosaics*, pl. 12; Megaw, 'Background Architecture', 196-7, 200-201.

79. Megaw, 'Background Architecture', 197 with fig. 4.

80. Megaw, 'Background Architecture', 197-8.

81. Krautheimer wrote that in the Middle Ages there was in operation 'a quite different approach as compared with that of the modern mind to the whole question of copying. Indeed the lack of geometrical precision is as characteristic as the "indifference" towards the precise imitation of architectural shapes and patterns. . . It would seem as though ■ given shape were imitated not so much for its own sake as for something else it implied . . .':

f the representation of Nazareth at Dayr al-Suryān.

A meaningful element in twelfth-century Annunciation scenes is the presence of a cupola, or ciborium, or both. A liturgical significance is bestowed on the moment the angel's message is received by the Virgin by the ciborium over her in Annunciation scenes in the *Homilies* of James Kokkinobaphos (fig. 11), as Jean Fournée has pointed out.⁸² The ciborium, supported on three columns, is different from the simple cupola of the Virgin's house in the earlier miniature of the angel greeting the Virgin (fig. 10). Instead it symbolises the Virgin's transformation into the sanctuary, the altar of the living God.⁸³ The Annunciation in MS Berlin gr. qu. 66 (fig. 1) is especially elaborate in this respect, with the roof of the house behind the Virgin surmounted by a small cupola, in addition to a tall ciborium behind Gabriel and a smaller one in between the two (fig. 17). In the Dayr al-Suryān scene, the structure supported on the pair of fluted columns, just visible despite the damage to the upper part of the conch, was probably such a ciborium, or aedicule, especially as it is surmounted by a circular shape with a cross.

Given the medieval view of depicting key identifying features of a place, rather than an accurate reconstruction, it is unnecessary, and probably impossible, to try to identify each and every building. And yet the 'aedicule' and the two-storey structure in the Dayr al-Suryān painting begs the question as to whether any reference to the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth itself, undergoing transformation at a similar time (1170-87) is intended here. After all, other associations with Nazareth, direct and indirect, can be posited. The carved column at the bottom of the scene, on which the incense burner stands, is reminiscent of the column in the grotto at the Church of

the Annunciation documented in the twelfth century as supporting an altar. Abbot Daniel, who travelled to the Holy Land in 1106-8, wrote that at the site of the Annunciation in the grotto, 'a small round marble altar has been erected here on a single small column, and at this altar the liturgy is celebrated.'⁸⁴ This, a feature of veneration by pilgrims, would have been retained in the rebuilding of the church in the 1170s-80s. A more general cross-reference point is the interest in Old and New Testament typology in the twelfth century, and the identification of exact geographical locations in the Holy Land. This included reference to the prophets as well as to Mary. For example, visitors to Nazareth were taken to the synagogue and shown where Isaiah's prophesy was believed to have taken place. The author of the *Work on Geography*, dateable between 1128-47, wrote that 'in the synagogue at Nazareth Jesus opened the book of Isaiah, and explained its meaning to the Jews.'⁸⁵ At Dayr al-Suryān Isaiah occupies pride of place on the Virgin's right in the typological arrangement. Certain key elements could have struck a chord of recognition with medieval viewers recalling Nazareth to mind by association: the column, the typological references, as well as the idea of an aedicule, however imaginatively this was interpreted in practice.

The twelfth-century Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth, an important pilgrimage site, was rebuilt, enlarged and decorated after the earthquake of 1170 and before the loss of the Latin kingdom to Saladin in 1187. It survived — whatever the state of completion of the rebuilding project — until its demolition by Sultan Baybars I in 1263.⁸⁶ The church was a basilica with its north aisle wall built over the grotto of the house of the Virgin. Excavations undertaken at the site disclosed that a shrine monument was located at the sixth bay of the north aisle.⁸⁷ Jaroslav Folda has supported the theory that in

R. Krautheimer, 'Introduction to an "Iconography" of Mediaeval Architecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1972) 8. The article is reprinted in the author's *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval, and Renaissance Art* (New York 1969), 115-150.

82. J. Fournée, 'Architectures symboliques dans le thème iconographique de l'Annonciation', in A. Grabar et al., *Synthronon: Art et Archéologie de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age* (Paris 1968) 230, with figs. 2 and 3.

83. For the tabernacle of the Lord as a type of the Virgin in a Coptic hymn, see above note 62.

84. J. Wilkinson with J. Hill and W.F. Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage 1099-1185* (London 1988) 163.

85. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 193.

86. J. Folda, *The Nazareth Capitals and the Crusader Shrine of the Annunciation* (Penn State Univ. Park and London 1986) 7.

87. Folda, *Nazareth Capitals*, 7, fig. 2, reproduces the plan of the Crusader church c. 1187 after B. Bagatti and E. Alliata, with the position of the former shrine monument designated SM. Pl. 73 reproduces a model of the site of the aedicule.

the 1180s — prior to the fall of Nazareth in 1187 — the shrine monument was being constructed at the north aisle above the Cave in the form of an octagonal aedicule.⁸⁸ The representation of an aedicule supported on columns surmounting Nazareth in the Dayr al-Suryān Annunciation is suggestive of this.

But the architecture of the town of Nazareth in the Annunciation scene goes beyond the purely literal and narrative to present a vision of salvation based on the typology of the Virgin. Highlighting the city gates refers to the closed doors of Ezekiel's prophecy and points to the Virgin as intercessor: a sermon in Coptic refers to the Virgin as the one who reopens to humankind the door of heaven, closed through the transgression of Adam and Eve.⁸⁹ The Virgin makes salvation possible by making accessible the heavenly city. Nazareth becomes Sion, heavenly Jerusalem on earth. This imagery is consistent with the visual representation of a biblical typology of the Virgin as it developed out of liturgical literature.⁹⁰ Sion was represented with the Virgin and Child in ninth-century psalters from Constantinople, with the city identified with the Mother of God. Thus, illustrating Psalm 86 [87]:5 in a Psalter on Mount Athos (Pantocrator 61) and the Kludov Psalter in Moscow, is a complex designated 'Holy Sion' with an icon of the Virgin and Child attached to its walls.⁹¹ Within the crenellated walls of Jerusalem are a basilica, tower, and the cupola of the Holy Sepulchre. Below, David gestures to the icon. By association, the artist at Dayr al-Suryān translates this imagery to Nazareth.

88. Folda, *Nazareth Capitals*, especially 27-30 re the polygonal shape and *passim*, with bibliography. It was planned, argues Folda, to decorate the corners of the aedicule with the four polygonal capitals, unearthed in 1908, carved with scenes from the lives of the apostles. This is not the place to discuss the reconstruction in detail; see the review of Folda's book by Denys Pringle in *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 120 (1988) 149-50.

89. Müller, *Koptische Predigt*, 231.

90. See Der Nersessian, 'Program and Iconography', 311-12. The literary developments begin in the eighth century; I am grateful for discussion with Dr. M. Cunningham on this point.

91. Fol. 121r: S. Dufrenoy, *L'illustration des psautiers grecs du moyen âge* (Paris 1966) 32 with pl. 18 (Pantocrator Psalter); K. Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in Ninth-Century Byzantine Psalters* (Cambridge 1992) 97-98 with figs. 99-100 points out that the Pantocrator psalter also has an inscription above David's head designating Sion 'the Holy City of God'.

The Garden Imagery of Fertility and Paradise

From Nazareth's two walled gardens grow tall trees, their branches waving out over the heads of the Prophets, sprouting heads of green leaves. Their red outlining, still preserved on the left side, equates them with the Burning Bush of Moses' prophecy.⁹² Metaphorically, these unify the Old and New Testaments under the same leaved umbrella. The image is one of fertility and growth, appropriate to the Annunciation, linked to the visual metaphors of renewal ultimately inspired by Byzantine literature of the ekphrasis of spring and sermons, as Henry Maguire has pointed out.⁹³ But this takes different forms in visual terms and it is the walled garden that is represented here. Parallels were cited above, particularly in late twelfth-century Sinai icons and at Kurbinovo.⁹⁴ The Kurbinovo scene (fig. 15) is particularly ornate, with a plant in a two-handled container as well as the trees growing from the roof-top garden. But the same idea of enclosure is there, this time with a balustrade, referring to the 'garden locked' of the Song of Songs (IV:12), and Mary's virginity. The late twelfth-century Sinai icon (fig. 14) also expands the detail, to include birds in the trees, alongside the nesting stalks on the roof-top. The vegetal ornament around the Dayr al-Suryān scene plays its part. The prominent band of fleshy plant ornament, of orange-red, white and green against a blue ground, bordered with orange-red, stands as a metaphor of fertility in the same way as the tree and plant ornament at the arch preceding the apse at Monreale, dated to the 1180s, associated with the Annunciation scene divided across the space above.⁹⁵ The floral imagery also further reinforces the association

92. Van Moorsel, 'Deir es Sourian Revisited', 10. See the Moses and the Burning Bush in MS Vat. Copto 1 (here fig. 18) for a Coptic rendering of the Bush, drawn around with red flames. In twelfth-century icons at Sinai the Burning Bush is more specifically depicted not as a tree but a compact bush, shaped to a point at the top and growing straight from the ground: see, for example, Soteriou, *Icons*, I, figs. 158 and 163.

93. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 42-52, especially 48.

94. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 102 and Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 48 enumerate other examples at Sinai, with late twelfth- and thirteenth-century paintings in Macedonia and Serbia.

95. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 49.

of Nazareth with Paradise.⁹⁶ The trees, then, function as a further attribute of the Virgin Mother of God, a counterpart to the flame at the bottom of the apse. The scent wafted from below produces abundance above.

The Throne

The Virgin is seated on a high-backed throne, of richly turned and patterned woodwork. She is similarly enthroned and resting her feet on an arcaded footstool in the late twelfth-century Sinai icon (fig. 14). This imagery endows her with both wisdom and royalty, as the Queen of Heaven. The association of the Virgin with the wisdom of Solomon, the 'sedes sapientiae' has rich liturgical connotations. Present in the liturgy of St. Basil, it is widespread in oriental Christian liturgies and hymns, including the Orthodox Syrian (Melkite), as well as the Greek.⁹⁷ The high-backed throne as royal symbol is shared with Virgin and Child imagery beyond Annunciation scenes. The mosaic of the Virgin Panachrantos (the Immaculate) in the apse at Monreale has the Virgin seated on a similar throne, which denotes her status.⁹⁸ In this scene, Constantinopolitan in origin, the throne replaces the crown of western imagery to denote royalty. Parallel ideas are being expressed in east and west at the same time. The royal attribution of the throne gives the Virgin the same status as the Coronation of the Virgin developing at the same time in the West, whatever the other, western, preoccupations of that iconography.⁹⁹

96. Floral imagery can be associated with Nazareth itself literally as well as metaphorically. In excavation work carried out at the Church of the Annunciation after 1955 Fr. B. Bagatti exposed carving in a subsidiary grotto with flowers and wreaths of victory; one inscription reads 'Christ, son of God': E. Hoade, *Guide to the Holy Land* (Jerusalem 1981) 691.

97. Fournée, 'Architecture symboliques', 231 with note 17.

98. Demus, *Mosaics*, 310 with fig. 63, points to churches with this dedication in Constantinople. Borsook, *Messages in Mosaic*, 57-58 discusses the mosaic in the context of the cycle of Marian imagery at Monreale.

99. While east and west converge in expressing the belief in the Virgin as the Mother of God and Queen of Heaven, the Coronation of the Virgin is the culmination of the exclusively western belief in the Assumption of the Virgin and the Virgin as the Church, the bride of Christ.

The Overpainting

The case has been made here for dating the earlier painting of the Annunciation to the 1170s to 1180s. So why then, was the scene overpainted only about forty-five years later, with a different scene, that of the Ascension?

There was a change of plan in the decoration of the church. The theme of the Annunciation in the upper scheme of c. 1225 (fig. 8, left side) was shifted to the east end of the church, to share a semidome with the Nativity, opposite the Dormition (fig. 7). (It is likely that the nave had a cycle of paintings as well, perhaps retained under today's plaster.) This change of plan was accompanied by a shift of emphasis, evident in both the inscriptions and the iconography. The inscriptions are exclusively Greek and Coptic in the original Annunciation but primarily Syriac in the upper paintings, with some Coptic — especially in the Annunciation. Coptic is therefore common to both stages, with Syriac replacing Greek in the upper layer. This is consistent with what is known of the influx of Syrian monks in 1194, supplemented by others in 1206.¹⁰⁰ A tip in the balance between the two communities at the monastery probably took place, with the Syrians again coming into the ascendancy at the turn of the thirteenth century. This also explains the iconographical change: the debate over public versus private confession, in any case blown over by the 1220s, was never a burning issue for the Syrians.¹⁰¹ Liturgical changes were probably made at the same time, as the concentration of less iconographically complex key feasts of the Virgin in the east sanctuary suggests. Perhaps also, with most of the Holy Land in the hands of the Ayyubids, the reference to Nazareth was seen as inappropriate, even inexpedient, in the early thirteenth century.

Conclusion

The vivid imagery of the Annunciation focuses on the redemptive significance of the Incarnation, attainable through prayer to the Virgin.

100. See above, note 18.

101. Furthermore relations between the Coptic patriarchs of Alexandria and the Syrian patriarchs of Antioch, at a high point in 1179 during the consultation over Ibn al-Kanbar's views on confession, had deteriorated a few decades later: see Cerulli, *Etiopi in Palestine*, 16-17 with note 1.

The typology of the Virgin, spelt out on the prophets' scrolls, is embodied in the Paradise imagery of Nazareth as Sion, the closed door and Burning Bush. The Virgin's authority is as the Mother of God, but also as the Queen of Heaven. That the painting functioned as an icon of the Liturgy of the Catechumens, the common confession, is suggested by the incense burning prominently at the front of the scene. This is supported by the location of the painting at the west end of the church, where it would have been reached by procession. A date in the 1170s-80s is proposed, when the controversy over Confession in the Coptic church was at its height. The issue was resolved through the intervention of the Syrian Jacobite Patriarch in 1179, whose community then proceeded to regain the upper hand at the monastery after the 1190s and oversaw the new programme of decoration at the Church of the Virgin around 1225. It is through its evocative Marian symbolism that the image transcends this context into the realm of ritual.

University of Birmingham

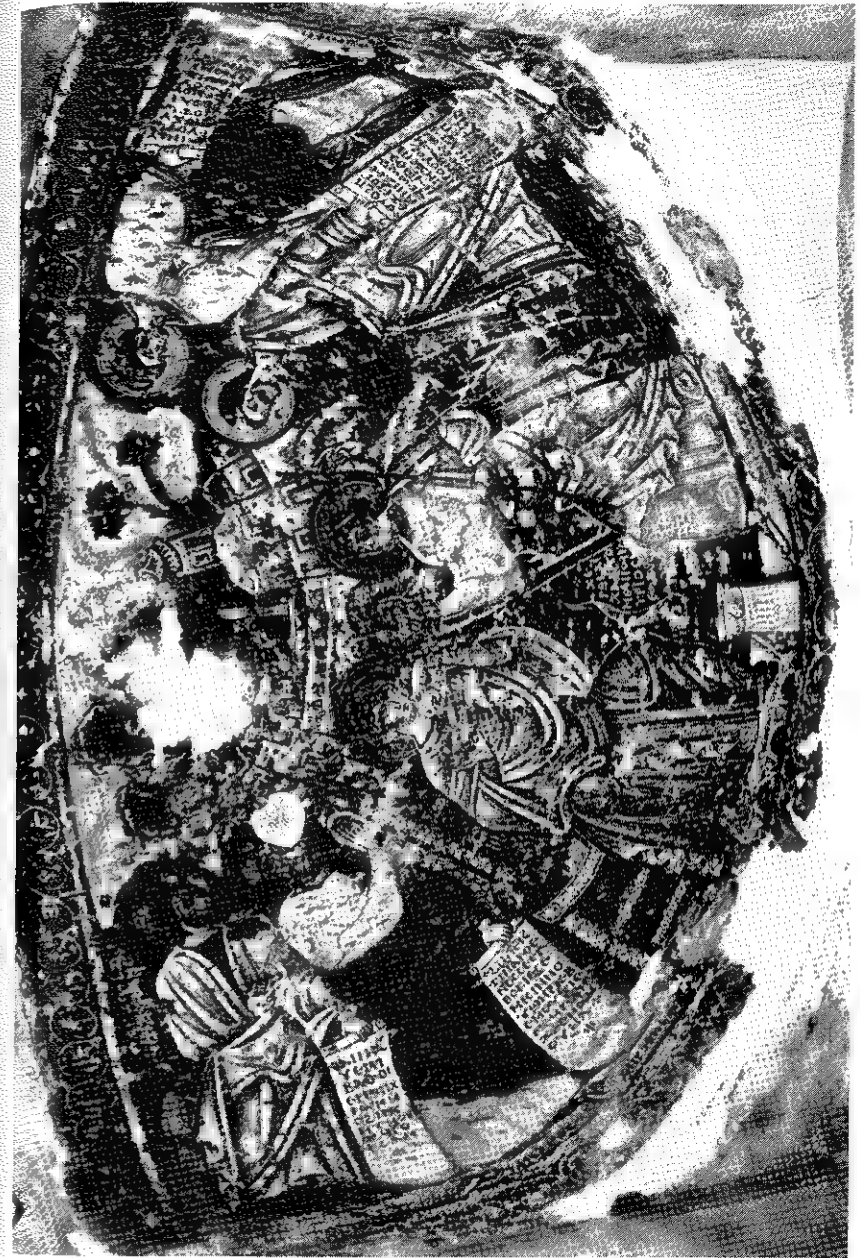


Fig. 1: Annunciation, lower layer of Western semidome, church of the Virgin, Dayr al-Suryān (Photo: M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 2: Annunciation, Dayr al-Suryān, detail of upper half (Photo: M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 3: Head of Virgin, Annunciation, Dayr al-Suryān, detail (Photo: M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 4: Prophets Ezekiel and Daniel, Annunciation, Dayr al-Suryān (Photo: M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 5: Church at Nazareth, Annunciation, Dayr al-Suryān (Photo: M. Immerzeel).

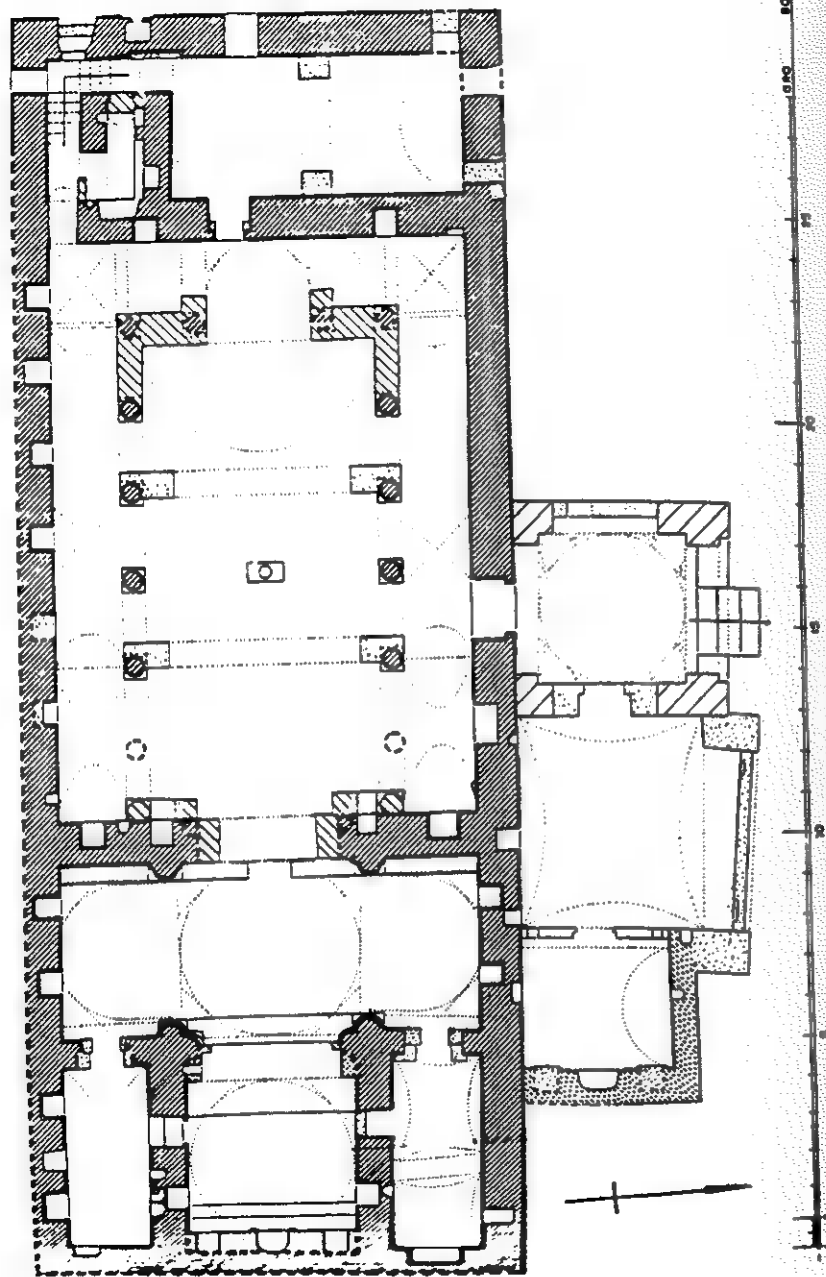


Fig. 6: Plan, Church of the Virgin, Dayr al-Suryān (after Grossmann).

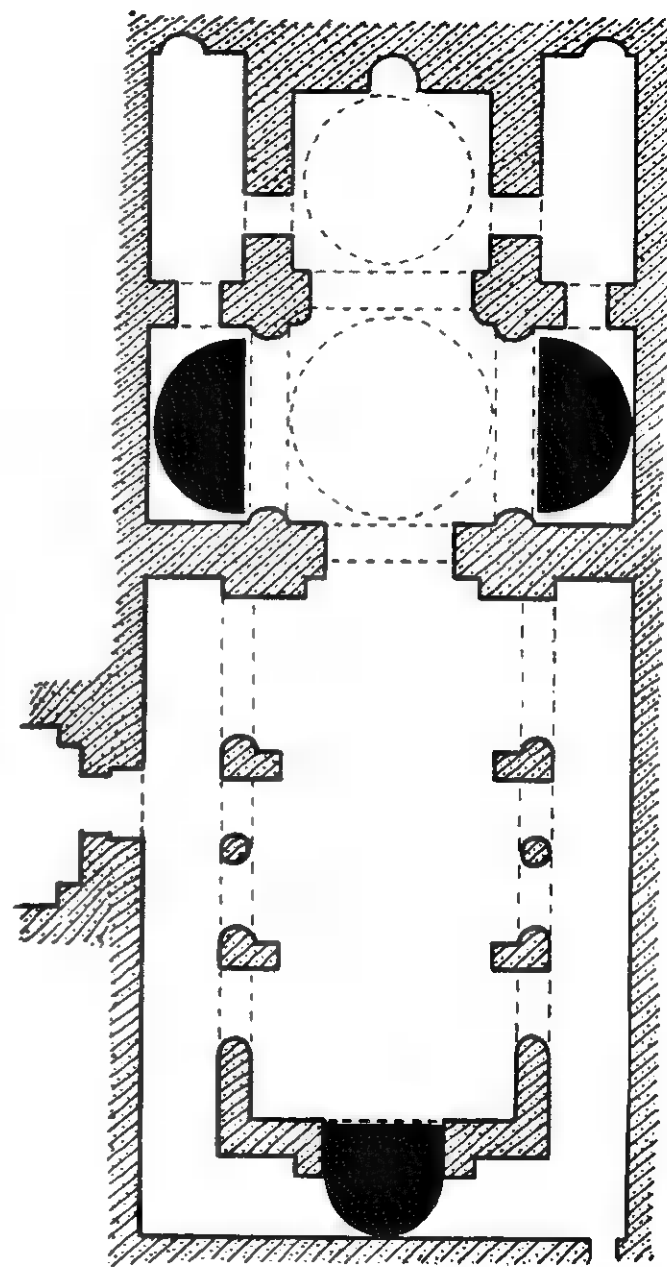


Fig. 7: Scheme of Church of the Virgin, showing position of wallpaintings (after Leroy).



Fig. 8: Annunciation/Nativity, Southern semidome, Church of the Virgin, Dayr al-Suryān (Photo: L.-A. Hunt).



Fig. 9: Head of one of the twenty four Elders from Dayr Abu Makar. Prinz Johann Georg Sammlung der Universität Mainz, on loan to the Landesmuseum Mainz (Photo: Courtesy Landesmuseum Mainz).

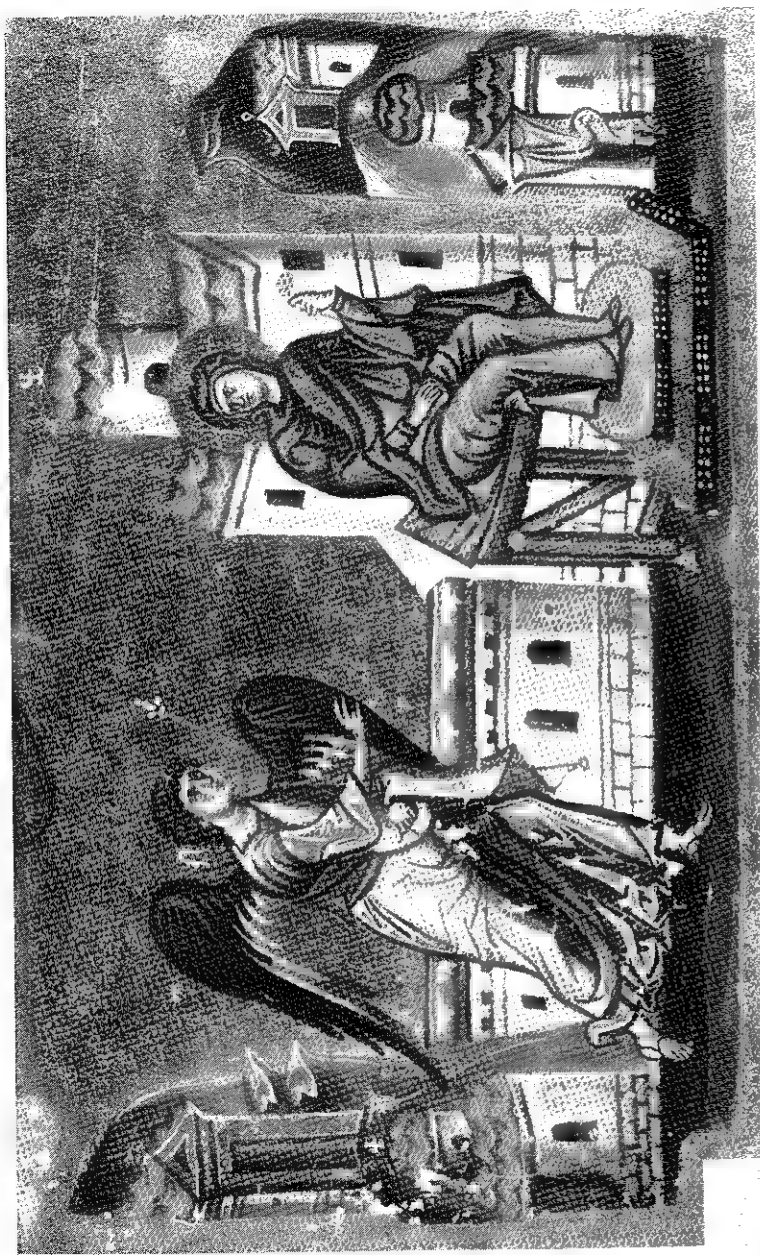


Fig. 10: Angel greeting the Virgin. Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos, MS Vat. gr. 1162 fol. 118r (Photo: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).

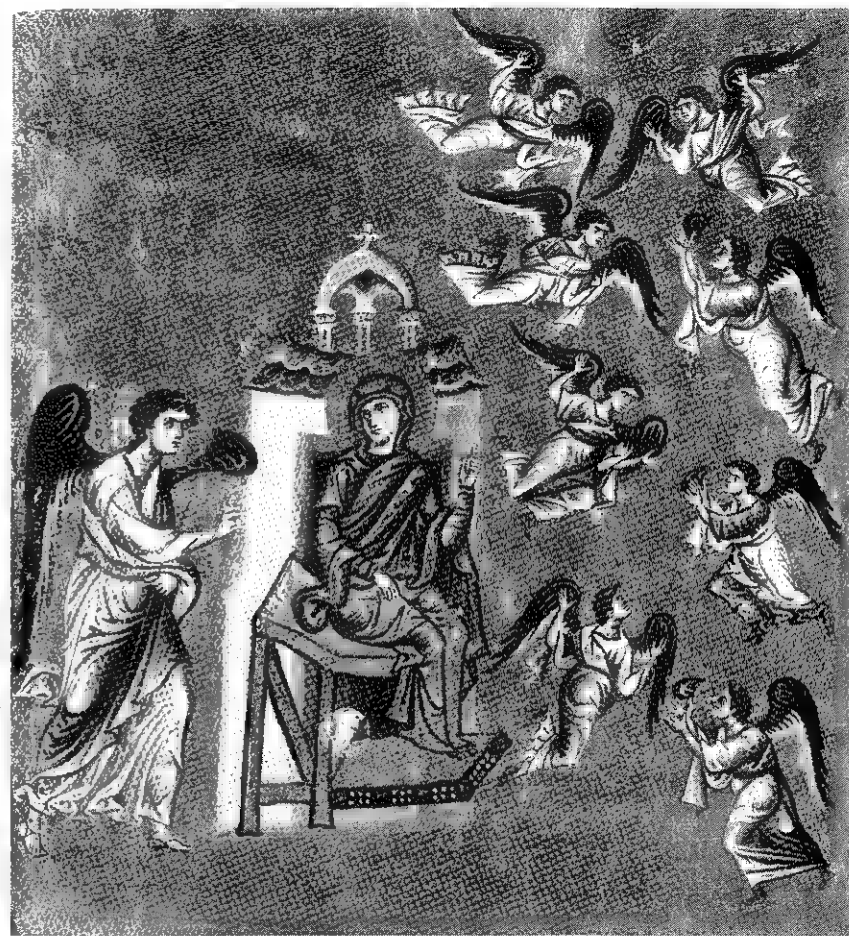


Fig. 11: Angel's message received by the Virgin. Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos, MS Vat. gr. 1162 fol. 127v (Photo: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).



Fig. 12: Virgin Kykkotissa with Christ in Glory, Prophets and Saints (Photo: Reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai).

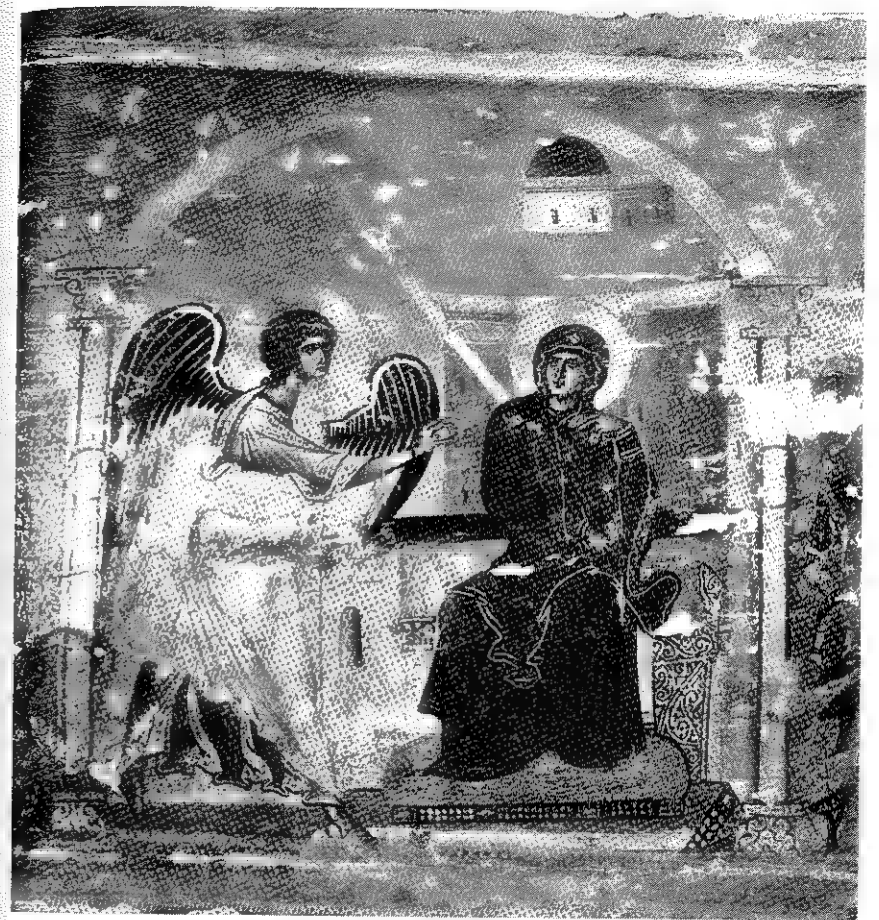


Fig. 13: Annunciation, detail of iconostasis beam, Sinai (Photo: Reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai).



Fig. 14: Annunciation icon, Mt. Sinai (Photo: Reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai).

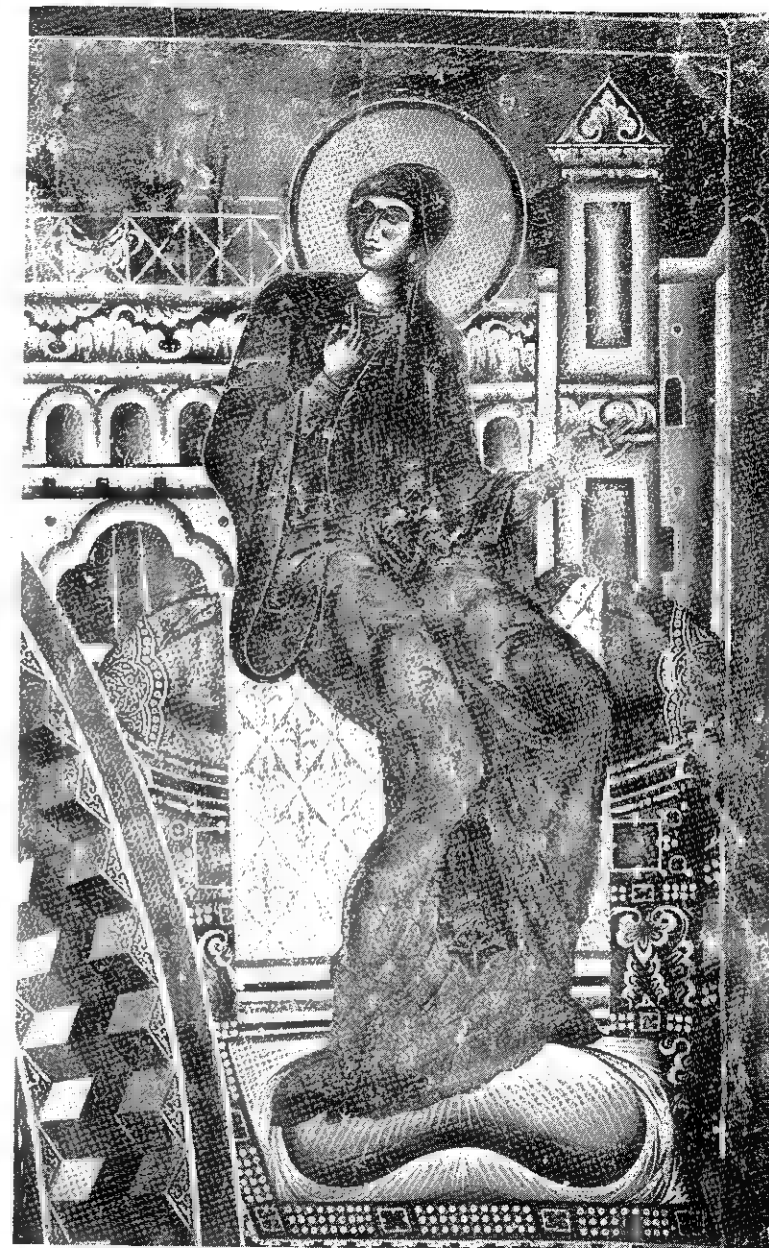


Fig. 15: Virgin from the Annunciation, Church of St. George, Kurbinovo (Photo: Josephine Powell).

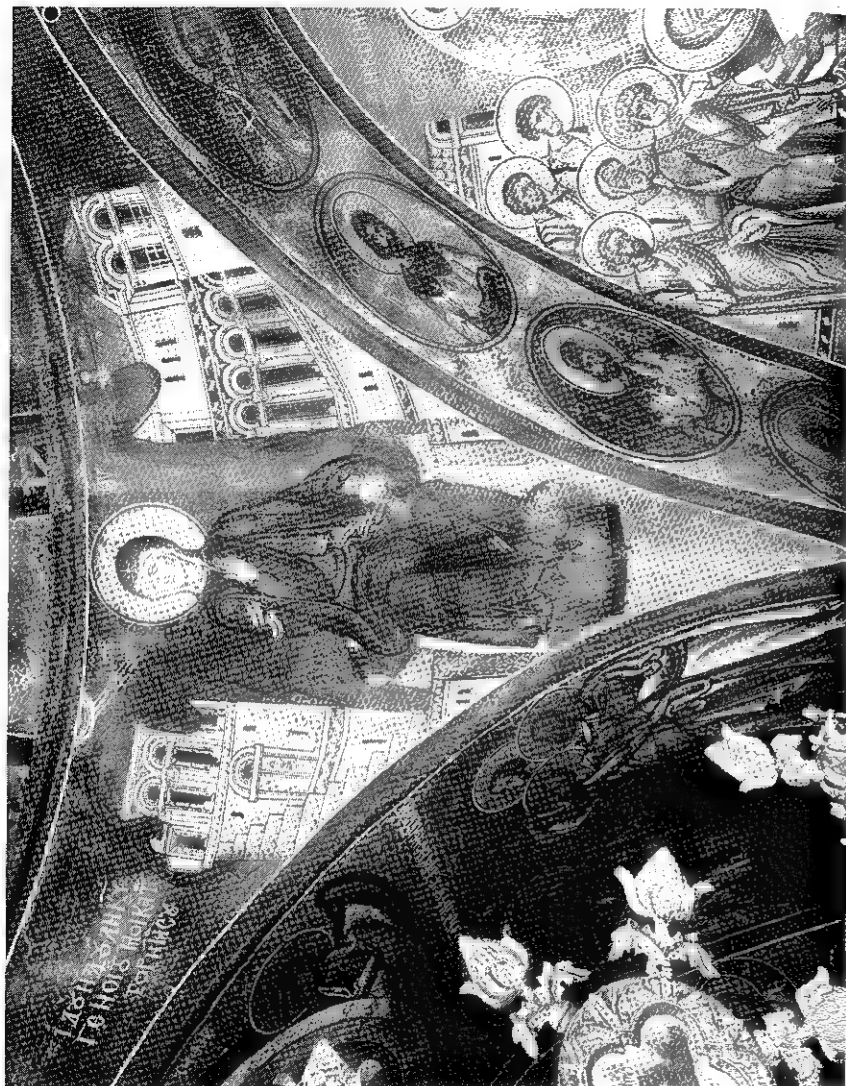


Fig. 16: Virgin from the Annunciation, Panagia tou Arakou, Lagoudera (Photo: Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C.)



Fig. 17: Annunciation, Berlin, Staatsbibl. gr. qu. 66 fol. 165r (Photo: Bildarchiv Foto Marburg).



Fig. 18: Moses with the Burning Bush. MS Vat. Copto 1 fol. 97v (Photo: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana).



Fig. 19: Palace Pavilion, House and Gateway. Spandrel of west portico, Great Mosque of Damascus (after Ettinghausen).

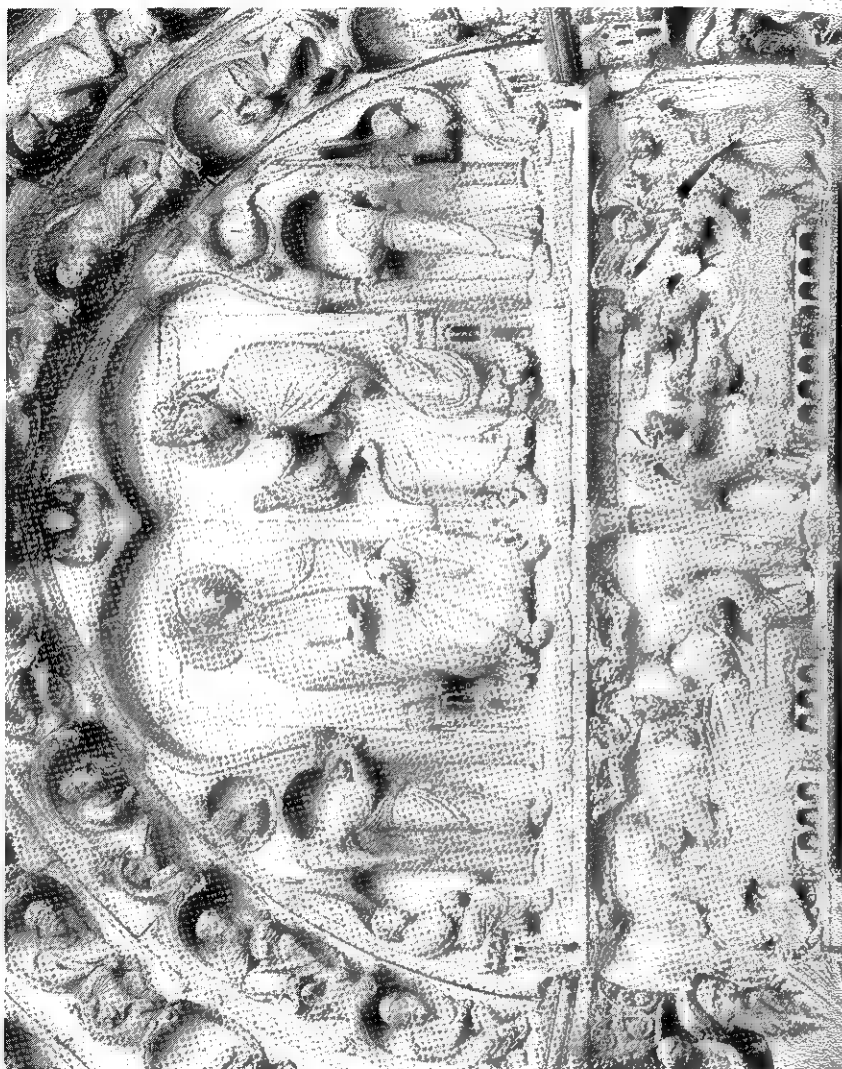


Fig. 20: The Coronation of the Virgin. West portal, Senlis Cathedral (Photo: James Austin).

SHORT NOTE

A Gothia in the Hellespont
in the early eighth century*

CONSTANTINE ZUCKERMAN

Alexander Kazhdan has recently brought to light a fascinating passage in the Commentary on Gregory of Nazianzos' Poems by Cosmas of Jerusalem, an obscure and little read text.¹ While my interpretation of the passage differs from the one proposed by Prof. Kazhdan, the credit for its discovery belongs entirely to him.

Cosmas comments on a line from Gregory's *Epigramma* 1 (cf. *PG* XXXIII, col. 81-82): . . . καὶ διὰ γαίης / νῆας ἔϋσσέλμους ἤγαγε Ὀρηκίης. I reproduce and translate his text below:

Τὸ δὲ διὰ ξηρᾶς ναῦς ἀγαγεῖν τῆς Ὀράκης, πολλοὶ μὲν πρότερον πεποιθήκασι, ἀλλὰ καὶ Κωνσταντῖνος πεποίηκεν ὁ νέος διὰ ξηρᾶς ἐλάσας τὰς ναῦς. Ἔστιν γὰρ περὶ τὴν Ὀράκην τόπος ἕξ μιλίων διάστημα ξηρᾶς ἔχων καὶ τῶν θαλασσῶν μεταξύ διυστῶν, ὅθεν εὐεπίβατος ἡ Ὀράκη τοῖς Γότθοις,

As for carrying the ships of Thrace overland, many did it before and also Constantine the Younger did it, having driven the ships overland. For there is a place next to Thrace, dry land six miles wide standing between (two) seas. From there, Thrace is easily accessible to the Goths and

*A Russian version of this study was presented at the International Conference on 'Byzantium and the Peoples in the Regions of the Black Sea and Mediterranean in the Early Middle Ages (4th-9th centuries)' which took place in Alushta (Crimea, Ukraine) in September 1994. My thanks are due to the organiser, Dr. Alexander Aibabin, and to his team for their excellent hospitality in most challenging conditions. Prof. Alexander Kazhdan commented on an early draft of this paper; Dr. Sergei Ivanov scrutinised the version presented at the conference. Their remarks helped me to clarify my argument while leaving me alone responsible for its tenor and for the remaining faults.

1. A. Kazhdan, 'Cosmas of Jerusalem 3. The Exegesis of Gregory of Nazianzos', *B* 61 (1991) 396-412; cf. ■ shorter version of this study, in Russian, 'Kos'ma Ierusalimskij i pohod Rusi na Konstantinopol' (Cosmas of Jerusalem and the Attack by the Rus on Constantinople', *VV* 52 (1991) 148-150. The passage discussed appears in *PG* 38, col. 534-535.

Γοθία δὲ τοῖς Ὀραξί² καὶ Γότθοι μὲν ἐπιόντες τὰς οἰκείας ναῦς (αὐταὶ δὲ μονόξυλοι) διαπερῶσι πρὸς Ὀράκας· Ὀράκας δὲ πολλάκις ἐντεῦθεν ἐπὶ Γοθίαν διὰ ξηρᾶς τὰς οἰκείας καθέλκουσι ναῦς. Κύκλος ἐστὶ πολὺς τ<οῖ>³ διὰ τῆς στενῆς θαλάσσης εἴτε ἀνιούσιν ἢ κατιούσιν μέχρις αὐτόσε· θάλασσα δὲ στενὴ ἐστὶν ἢ διὰ τῆς Ἀβύδου (πόλεως δὲ τῆς Τρωάδος αὕτη) ἐπὶ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν φέρουσα, κάκειθεν ἐπὶ τὴν Ποντικὴν παραπέμπουσα θάλασσαν, μιλίων ἔχουσα διάστημα μικρῷ πρὸς τριακοσίων.

Gothia to the Thracians. And the Goths get on their ships — they are made from a single trunk — and cross to Thrace, while the Thracians often drag their ships through there towards Gothia overland. Those who go to that point either up or down the sea strait make a big detour; the sea strait is the one which takes (you) by the way of Abydos — a city in Troad — to Constantinople and from there to the Pontic Sea, a distance of about 300 miles.

Kazhdan dismisses the end of the passage, from Κύκλος ἐστὶ on, as an incomprehensible 'annex to the preceding section — a sort of (unhappy) explanation of the word στενή' (p.405). The description of a six-mile isthmus corresponds, in his view, to no geographical reality. He identifies Gothia as 'the northern shore of the Black Sea in the most general and vaguest form' (p.406). The mention of ships made of a single trunk (μονόξυλοι) reminds him of Constantine Porphyrogenitus' description of the Rus who sail to Constantinople in their μονόξυλα and carry them for six miles overland past the largest rapids of the Dnepr.⁴ The same distance of six miles is, indeed, mentioned by Cosmas. Then Kazhdan links the most striking detail in Cosmas' text, the mention of Constantine ὁ νέος driving the ships overland, with the famous account in the Russian Primary Chronicle (*Povest' vremennyh let*) of the attack on Constantinople by the King of the Rus, Oleg, who put his ships on wheels and thus scared the Byzantines. Cosmas' testimony would confirm the historicity

2. A. Mai, whose edition of the text is reprinted in the *PG*, added Ὀραξί [ἄμορος]. Mai's Latin translation shows that he could not construct without this correction ■ phrase which is, in fact, perfectly coherent as it stands.

3. I correct the τῆς of the printed text.

4. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, 9, l. 50-55, ed. Gy. Moravcsik-tr. R.J.H. Jenkins² (Washington 1967), pp.60-61. The use of the μονόξυλοι is, however, by no means restricted to the Slavs. The TLG provides scores of references from different periods and regions.

of the attack considered by many scholars as legendary. The Chronicle sets the attack in 907, and so Kazhdan suggests identifying Constantine ὁ νέος as Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, born in 905. This analysis leaves the reader confused as to who, the Byzantines of Constantine VII or the Rus of Oleg, actually put their ships on wheels. In Kazhdan's view, it is Cosmas — or his source — who creates the confusion. Cosmas presumably mixed up Oleg's attack of 907, which involved moving ships overland, and the Byzantine victory over the Rus in 941, which involved no such manoeuvre, but which could be attributed to Constantine VII (despite the fact that the 'senior' emperor was at the time Romanus I Lecapenus). In any case, Kazhdan presents his interpretation of the text as hypothetical, admitting that it leaves several issues unresolved and emphasising the 'controversial' character of the data (p.411).⁵

Cosmas of Jerusalem, the author of the Commentary, is generally identified as the co-disciple and addressee of the famous defender of icons, John of Damascus. His work is dated accordingly in the first half of the eighth century.⁶ Assuming that the text speaks of a tenth-century event, Kazhdan rejects its attribution to Cosmas.

This revision is hardly necessary. I hope to show that the event in question belongs in fact to the late seventh century and could not fit better in an early-eighth century writer.

Identifying the emperor Constantine the Younger is the key to the chronology of the passage. In establishing his identity, one needs to keep in mind the distinction between the rather common honorific title 'the New Constantine' (ὁ νέος Κωνσταντῖνος) — which would not in itself enable us to identify the emperor who bore it — and the surname 'Constantine the Younger' (Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ νέος) used to distinguish its bearer from another Constantine, the senior. Seven lines before the episode with the ships, Cosmas mentions the emperor Constantine 'who was murdered in Syracuse'. This Constantine, better known as Constans II (641-668), had a son also named Constantine

5. My short survey follows the English version of Kazhdan's study which revises on several points the argument made in the Russian article.

6. M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, II (Tournhout 1974) 194 (3043).

(IV: 668-685). The surname ὁ νέος in Cosmas' text clearly relates the second Constantine mentioned to the first. Constantine IV was, in fact, the only emperor of those who bore this name to be officially remembered as Constantine the Younger: this is the way he is commemorated in the *Synaxaria*.⁷

As for the geographical setting of Cosmas' description, the part dismissed by Kazhdan is cardinal. It makes it clear that there can be no question in the text of the northern Black Sea region. The narrow land that the Goths and the Thracians cross is said to be a promontory (*chersonesos*) in a strait which goes from the city of Abydos to Constantinople and to the Black Sea. As a glance at a map will show, this can only be the Chersonesus of Thrace, a promontory which nearly bars access to the Propontis. For ships which coast southern Thrace it creates a long detour. The narrowest point of the promontory, about six miles wide, is situated slightly to the north-east of the city of Lampsacus. All the movement of ships described by Cosmas takes place to the south of Constantinople.⁸

Dragging ships across the promontory was, according to our text, nothing exceptional. Cosmas explains it by the time gain of avoiding the detour along the promontory. Originally, though, the use of this route might have been encouraged by yet another reason. The city of Abydos housed the main custom station on the seaway to Constantinople and petty local traders, unlike owners of bigger ships, could be tempted to avoid meeting the *sportulae* — greedy customs-officers by dragging their vessels overland.⁹

7. V. Grumel, 'Quel est l'empereur Constantin le nouveau commémoré dans le Synaxaire au 3 septembre?', *AB* 84 (1966) 254-260. Expectedly enough, there is no evidence for Constantine VII — who had no Constantine among his ancestors or close predecessors — being dubbed ὁ νέος. Kazhdan, p.407, cites, with no identification proposed, a Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ νέος in John Xiphilinus' *Miracles of St. Eugenius of Trebizond*, ed. O. Lampsides, "Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος ὁ πολιοῦχος τῆς Τραπεζοῦντος (Athens 1984) 90. This could be Constantine VII's grandson, Constantine VIII.

8. The total length of sail through the Straits, from the entrance to the Dardanelles to the Black Sea (along the European coast which is shorter), is little over 300 kilometres and not 300 miles (ca 450 kilometres), as indicated by Cosmas. One can blame this mistake on the fact that the author, a Palestinian monk, probably never made this journey himself.

9. See J. Durliat and A. Guillou, 'Le tarif d'Abydos (vers 492)', *BCH* 108 (1984) 581-598; G. Dagron, in G. Dagron and D. Feissel, 'Inscriptions inédites du Musée d'Antioche', *TM* 9 (1985) 421-461, see 435-455.

None of these considerations, of course, could have played any role in Constantine IV's decision to use the land route for moving his ships. Kazhdan points out rightly the distinction which Cosmas draws between 'dragging' the ships (καθέλκουσι) as the feature of the common traffic — this must apply to small vessels — and Constantine's 'driving' (ἐλάσας) them over, obviously fitted on some kind of wheeled device. The time and effort invested in moving in this manner the ships of the imperial navy instead of simply sailing around the promontory would make the entire operation look crazy if not for the weightiest of reasons: Constantine IV had no choice.

In the early years of Constantine IV's reign, the city of Constantinople and its surroundings were subjected to constant harassment by the Arab fleet. A naval force headed by Fadallah b. Ubayad occupied the port of Cyzicus in 670, and the Arab fleet, subsequently reinforced, maintained its presence in the Propontis for the next seven years (670/1-676/7). Constantine IV gathered the ships available in the immediate vicinity of Constantinople and employed them with success for the defence of the capital. After seven years, the Arabs retreated, worn by the losses in battle — it appears that they were exposed for the first time to the massive use of the Greek fire — and decimated by a storm.¹⁰

Throughout this period, there was no attempt to contest the Arab control of the Propontis. The Arab ships based in Cyzicus, barely a day's sail from the Dardanelles, controlled the strait. Only this blockade can explain why Constantine IV had recourse to such an unusual device as driving the ships — no doubt a reinforcement he needed for the defence of the capital — overland across the promontory. In fact, the singular circumstances of the naval blockade would suggest placing the episode described by Cosmas in the reign of Constantine IV even with no other indication available.

10. The sources are quoted in A.N. Stratos, 'Siège ou blocus de Constantinople sous Constantin IV', *JÖB* 33 (1983) 89-107. Unlike Stratos, I see no reason to doubt that the Arab pressure lasted for seven years — the figure is quoted by Theophanes and Nicephorus who follow a common source as well as in Arab sources (cf. M. Canard, 'Les expéditions des arabes contre Constantinople dans l'histoire et dans la légende', *Journal Asiatique* 208 [1926] 61-121, 77-80, reprinted in *idem*, *Byzance et les musulmans du Proche Orient* (London [Variorum] 1973) no. I) — or to affirm, 'malgré ce que rapportent les sources (my italics, C.Z.), que Fadallah fit une simple expédition de reconnaissance (p.98)'.

The last point which calls for a commentary concerns the presence of the Goths. According to Cosmas, the country on the Asian shore of the sea strait, opposite the promontory, was inhabited by Goths and called Gothia (ὅθεν εὐεπίβατος ἡ Θράκη τοῖς Γότθοις, Γοθία δὲ τοῖς Θραξί·). This indication of a settlement of Goths on the western coast of Asia Minor may cause a surprise. It would appear less surprising, however, if brought in connection with the dossier of the so-called *Gothograeci*. Here are the relevant data:

I. The Chronicle of Theophanes (ca 815) mentions the *Gothograeci* in describing the revolt against the emperor Artemius in 715. The troops of the Opsikion, gathered on the island of Rhodes for a military expedition, rebelled, killed their commander, the general logothete John, crossed to the mainland and, as they moved by sea and by land towards Constantinople, stirred rebellion among 'the entire *thema* of Opsikion and the *Gothograeci*'.¹¹ The parallel description in Nicephorus only features 'the entire army of the Opsikion'.¹² Whatever the exact position of the *Gothograeci* within the army, the rebellious troops moved the entire time in the territory of the Opsikion and passed through the very coastal area which Cosmas calls Gothia.

II. Arethas, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, writing in the early tenth century, mentions the Goths and the *Gothograeci* in a rather confused passage of his commentary on the *Apocalypsis*. Arethas speculates that the biblical Gog and Magog are the Scythian peoples of the North who often flee from their own brethren, as they destroy each other and are being destroyed. Their incursions are at the origin of the name of Scythopolis in Palestine, of a certain division of Goths in Asia and of the (related) military formation, as well as of the T(h)aifali and of the *Gothograeci* 'whom we call by the general name of Huns'.¹³ This construction is a pure fantasy. Arethas knew that

11. Theophanes, A.M. 6207, ed. de Boor (Leipzig 1883) 385-386.

12. Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, *Short History*, 51 (ed. C. Mango [Washington 1990] 118).

13. 'Ἀπὸ τούτων τῆς ἐπιδρομῆς καὶ Σκυθόπολιν ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ ὀνομασθῆναι, καὶ Γότθων μοῖραν τινα κατὰ μέρη τῆς Ἀσίας στρατιωτικὴν τε σύστασιν οὕτω καλεῖσθαι, καὶ Θαῖφάλους καὶ Γοτθογραφικούς, ἅπερ κοινῶ λόγῳ καλοῦμεν Οὐννικά·', PG 106, col. 756. I have modified the punctuation of the printed text which makes no sense.

both Goths and Huns were called Scythians by classicising writers. He no doubt read the description in Zosimus of the Goths and the Taifali fleeing the Huns in 379/80.¹⁴ He also heard of some Goths settled in Asia as a military unit and of the *Gothograeci*. By blending all these tribes in one people, Arethas obtained the image of the Scythians who seek refuge in the Byzantine Empire from their internal fights.

III. The *Life* of St. David, Symeon and George describes a sea-trip by St. George — the event is set in the early ninth century but the text is somewhat more recent — who arrived in Gothograecia from Lesbos after two days and nights on a stormy sea.¹⁵ It has been reasonably suggested that George could not have travelled too far from Lesbos before reaching his destination.¹⁶

IV. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in describing the *thema* of Opsikion, speaks of the *Graeci* (Γραικοί) whom he locates on the coast near Cyzicus. He derives their name from Granicus, the river in which Alexander the Great gave battle to the Persians¹⁷ and which flows into the Propontis about thirty miles to the west of Cyzicus, half-way between this city and the crossing place described by Cosmas.

V. Anna Comnena mentions a locality, named τῆς Κοιτορακίας, not far from the hilly country of Lentiana which is localised by Ramsay some twenty miles to the south of Cyzicus.¹⁸

14. Zosime, *Histoire nouvelle* IV, XXV, 1, ed. F. Paschoud, II (Paris 1979) 287.

15. *AB* 18 (1899) 256, cf. F. Halkin, 'Y a-t-il trois saints Georges évêques de Mytilène et 'confesseurs' sous les iconoclastes?', *AB* 77 (1959) 464-469, see 467-469.

16. Ju. Kulakovskij, *Istoria Vizantii*, III (Kiev 1915) [repr. 1973] 415-416, against the supposition — defended in the last place by E. Stein, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches* (Stuttgart 1919) 127 — that Gothograecia should be situated as far as Gothia in Crimea.

17. *De Thematribus*, IV, 14-17, ed. Pertusi, p. 69. On the χώρα τῶν καλουμένων Δαγοσθηνῶν, *ibid.* I, 12 — which, contrary to what has been suggested by some, is not related to our topic — see V. Laurent, *La vie merveilleuse de Saint Pierre d'Atroa* (+837) (Subsidia Hagiographica 29, Bruxelles 1956) 75-76.

18. Anne Comnène, *Alexiade* XV, 4, ed. B. Leib, 3 (Paris 1945) 189, with W.M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London 1890 [repr. 1962]) 158 and the map opposite 178.

The data presented can be interpreted in two ways. One could follow Arethas of Caesarea in distinguishing between the Goths and the *Gothograeci*. The former would then be situated to the west, in the region of Lampsacus, and the latter to the east, closer to Cyzicus. However, the whole distance between the two cities is little over sixty miles. The link between the *Graeci* and Granicus in Constantine Porphyrogenitus shows, moreover, that Gothograecia occupied the coast to the west of Cyzicus. These indications suggest a second solution which I strongly favour, which would consist in identifying the Goths and the *Gothograeci*. The corruption of the latter form by Constantine VII, Arethas' younger contemporary, makes it clear that in the tenth century, the name *Gothograeci* no longer corresponded to an ethnic reality. Arethas knew that the Goths had once been settled in Asia, he heard the name *Gothograeci*, and he mixed both elements in his ethnic cocktail. As we have seen, Arethas' main interest were the names. Cosmas' Gothia, alias Gothograecia, should then be localised between Lampsacus and Cyzicus, with the probable centre in the bay of Cyzicus.

It is not my purpose to dwell here on the date and circumstances of the Goths' settlement in the Hellespont. An old theory which presented them as the descendants of the Goths settled in Phrygia in the fourth century has been discarded, with good reason, in a recent study and their arrival has been linked with the military changes of the late sixth and the early seventh century.¹⁹ I would not exclude a late-seventh-century date. But whatever date is retained, Cosmas of Jerusalem — whose authorship of the Commentary no longer needs to be contested — provides the earliest and the most vivid evidence on their installation. He is also the one to possess the clearest notion of the newcomers' ethnic identity. Thus, behind the somewhat nebulous Gothograecia, he reveals a brand-new Gothia, in the Hellespont, adding another site to the previously attested 'countries of the Goths'.

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Collège de France

19. See J.F. Haldon, *Byzantine Praetorians. An Administrative, Institutional and Social Survey of the Opsikion and Tagmata, c. 580-900* (POIKILA BYZANTINA 3, Bonn 1984) 96-97, 200-202, 210, 226 and notes.

CRITICAL STUDY

The middle Byzantine economy: growth or stagnation?

ALAN HARVEY

In recent years there have been significant advances in our understanding of the Byzantine rural economy. While work on such problems as the legal status of the peasantry, the fiscal procedures by which the state extracted revenues from the peasantry and the nature of the fiscal concessions which the state made to landowners remains central to our understanding of the Byzantine social structure, greater attention has been paid recently to the history of settlements, agricultural production and the influence of the climate and environment on the rural economy. Recent work has been greatly facilitated by two developments, the publication of more material from the archives of Mount Athos and the upsurge in intensive surveys and other archaeological work which is already providing us with information about regions for which our documentary material is either inadequate or non-existent. This paper will not attempt a comprehensive discussion of all recent work on the subject, but will focus on some of the most significant problems affecting our understanding of the Byzantine rural economy.

The main problem which confronts researchers into Byzantine agricultural technology is the inadequacy of the source material. There are no treatises on agriculture comparable to those produced in the ancient world. The *Geoponika*, which was probably commissioned by Constantine VII, was largely derivative from ancient sources. Its value for the study of Byzantine agriculture is questionable and detailed descriptions of agricultural techniques are not found in other sources. Bryer and Kaplan have attempted to tackle these difficulties by using manuscript illustrations of agricultural implements. This can be supplemented by isolated finds of tools on archaeological sites. This

area of study offers the best prospects in the long term of significantly improving our knowledge of agricultural practices — not only in relation to the implements which were used, but also improvements such as irrigation and drainage systems — but at present the finds are too few and dispersed to provide more than general indications. The archival documents occasionally list the tools which were kept on specific properties, but say little about them except to note those with iron parts. A comparison between this evidence and the more detailed information about agriculture in the ancient world and the post-Byzantine period demonstrates that there was no fundamental change in agricultural technology during the Byzantine period.¹

Kaplan has pointed to this limitation in the development of the forces of production to support his argument that by the eleventh century Byzantium was affected by an economic *blocage* in contrast to the more dynamic west. The technological components of this *blocage* were the absence of the heavy plough which was widely adopted in the west, the limited efficiency of the watermills in Byzantium, the limited application of irrigation techniques in contrast to the Arab Caliphate where ambitious irrigation projects were linked to the introduction of a range of new crops, the absence of any complex system of crop rotation in which legumes were used on a large scale to maintain the fertility of the soil, and climatic restraints upon crop diversification.²

It is very questionable whether the application of the heavy plough, the adoption of which was a lengthy process in temperate regions with heavy soils in the west, was practicable in the climatic conditions of the eastern Mediterranean where farming practices were concerned with the retention of moisture in the soil. Shallow tillage by a plough which scratches the soil is suitable for dryer regions. The sole-ard

1. A.A.M. Bryer, 'Byzantine Agricultural Implements: the Evidence of Medieval Illustrations of Hesiod's *Works and Days*', *ABSA* 81 (1986) 45-80; M. Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VI^e au XI^e siècle. Propriété et exploitation du sol* (Paris 1992) 46f.; A. Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire 900-1200* (Cambridge 1990) 122-25. For an assessment of the *Geoponika*, see K.D. White, *Roman Farming* (London 1970) 32, 45-46.

2. Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 68-69, 85-87.

plough was also cheap and easy to construct and it facilitated regular ploughing.

Any assessment of Byzantine agricultural production has to consider not only the lack of technological innovation, but to assess the extent to which resources were exploited efficiently within the framework of the existing technology. Here, the comparison with the Islamic world is particularly important. It raises the question whether there was more which the Byzantines could have done to improve the range of crops which they cultivated and their yields. The introduction of a range of new crops into the Islamic world was connected to the development of an extensive irrigation system. According to Watson heavily irrigated areas were a feature of every part of the Islamic world by the ninth and tenth centuries.³ These irrigation networks were developed at a time when the Caliphate was at the peak of its power and could ensure the security which was necessary for such a sophisticated irrigation network to provide substantial returns. This agricultural regime was, however, very precariously established. The irrigation works were very expensive to maintain and could suffer serious damage as a result of political and military instability. The large scale use of such technology by the Byzantines was not feasible in the political conditions which prevailed in the early middle ages especially, and was not appropriate in every region, although there is evidence of irrigation projects initiated by individual landowners.⁴

Kaplan argues that the rural economy's capacity for growth was restricted by the requirements of self-sufficiency. This applied at all levels of Byzantine society. Obviously, peasants needed to devote a large proportion of their produce to maintaining the household and their fiscal burden was a crucial factor in limiting their resources for making improvements to their properties. Kaplan makes a connection between peasant prosperity and a relatively light fiscal

3. A.M. Watson, *Agricultural Innovation in the Early Islamic World. The Diffusion of Crops and Farming Techniques 700-1100* (Cambridge 1983) 103-11, 140. See also E. Ashtor, *A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages* (London 1976) 45-48, 171. For Byzantine irrigation projects, see Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 134-35.

4. Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 122-23. For a discussion of the social and economic reasons for the continued use of less efficient types of water-mill, *ibid.*, 128-33.

burden. Similarly, in his interpretation of the tenth-century legislation an intensification of taxation is presented as a major factor in weakening the peasant economy enabling powerful landowners to force their way into peasant communities.⁵

His arguments are supported by an attempt to calculate the viability of peasant households, taking into account such variables as the status of the peasant (which affected payments of rent and tax) and the possession of ploughing animals.⁶ This approach involves many problems, of which Kaplan is fully aware, but they are serious enough to call into question the usefulness of the exercise. Firstly, there is no place in the calculations for the numerous exactions in kind which could be extracted from the peasantry and it is practically impossible to assess the effect of the imposition of labour services on the peasantry. These obligations, referred to in general terms as *epereiai* and *angareiai*, were specified in increasing detail in the documents of the eleventh century, but the arbitrary nature of some of these exactions, especially those relating to the billeting of soldiers could have had a serious impact on the livelihood of peasants.⁷ There are also other complicating factors which suggest that the peasant household could be more resilient than Kaplan's conclusions imply. The calculations are based on grain production and other aspects of agricultural production like pastoral farming cannot easily be taken into account. We do not know for certain what produce was sold to obtain cash for rent and tax payments, but less bulky items like wine and oil could be transported more easily to markets. In practice this would have depended on environmental factors affecting agricultural production; for instance, in the south of Greece oil production could have been very lucrative. Peasant subsistence was also supported by a range of non-agricultural activities. Fishing

5. Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 544-49.

6. *Ibid.*, 500-20. One problem with Kaplan's tables is his interpretation of the *demoiarios* as a *paroikos* of the state, *ibid.*, 264-68. For the argument that the *demoiarios* was simply a peasant who owed the *demosion* (land-tax) to the state, see most recently A. Harvey, 'Peasant Categories in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', *BMGS* 14 (1990) 250-56. If this latter view is correct, then Kaplan's calculations will need revision.

7. For this range of obligations, see Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 102-9.

provided a valuable dietary supplement and some peasants added to their income by small scale artisanal work.⁸ Another area of economic activity from which the peasantry could have derived considerable benefit, the exploitation of woodland and scrubland, has largely been ignored by historians, but Dunn has recently provided an analysis of the products which are known to have been extracted from trees and shrubs during the Byzantine period. They provided *inter alia* the raw materials for tanning and dyeing. Other forms of exploitation included coppicing, felling for timber, pasturing pigs and hunting. Given the surviving source material it would be impossible to integrate these activities into a statistical analysis of the peasant economy, but Dunn has provided a considerable amount of evidence of the commercial potential of woodland products and their contribution to the viability of agricultural communities should not be overlooked.⁹

The peasant economy may have been more resilient than Kaplan's statistics imply. Our problem is that the peasantry has to be examined mainly through evidence which relates to the properties of large landowners. On many estates the steady expansion of the cultivated area over a period of time was most likely the result of the piecemeal activities of peasant cultivators rather than the more systematic initiatives of landowners. The sources rarely touch on this aspect of rural life. Expansion on an estate can often be traced only from a distance, as the landowner received intermittent grants from the state which give no indication of the economic activities of the peasantry.¹⁰

The ethos of self-sufficiency was not, however, confined to the peasantry. There is the well known advice of Kekaumenos to avoid speculative ventures and concentrate on crops which produce a regular return for minimal outlay. The case of Gregory Pakourianos supports

8. *Ibid.*, 147, 158-59. A.E. Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire. A Social and Demographic Study* (Princeton 1977) 120-27.

9. A. Dunn, 'The Exploitation and Control of Woodland and Scrubland in the Byzantine World', *BMGS* 16 (1992) 254-57.

10. Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 64; for instances where the *paroikoi* of landowners encroached on other properties, *ibid.* 62.

Kaplan's argument neatly. Pakourianos spent considerable sums on creating new villages and building fortifications and the brief statements in his *typikon* suggest that his main concern was to increase the extent of his properties rather than to improve those which he already owned. In his instructions on the disposal of some of his monastery's monetary reserve he envisaged the purchase of estates but says nothing about expenditure on improving its lands. The evidence for the activities of larger landowners is, however, more ambivalent. Kaplan points to the commercial activities of monasteries like Lavra and St. Lazaros's foundation at Galesion and he also stresses the expenditure of landowners like Psellos who took possession of monasteries as *charistikia*.¹¹

Kaplan's very detailed exposition of the limits to expansion in the agrarian economy is strongly argued. The main reservations about his thesis are chronological. He sees the Byzantine economy remaining at a constant level of productivity from the sixth to the eleventh century. Whereas technological advances were leading to an increase in agricultural productivity in the medieval west by the eleventh century, the Byzantines were unable to match this development. The block on agricultural expansion in Byzantium is expressed through this contrast with the medieval west rather than demonstrated through an assessment of the Byzantine agrarian economy after the eleventh century.¹² This raises serious problems because recent work on the Byzantine economy provides considerable evidence that population levels continued to rise after the eleventh century and that the Byzantine economy was far from stagnant, as commercial activity in the towns of the European provinces increased and coinage circulated in large quantities. The arguments put forward in the work of, among others, Hendy and Kazhdan need to be confronted directly if the hypothesis of an eleventh-century economic *blocage* is to be sustained.¹³

11. Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 304-6, 493, 565-66. See also M. Zivojinovic, 'The Trade of Mount Athos Monasteries', *ZRV* 29-30 (1991) 101-15.

12. Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 86-87.

13. M.F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c. 300-1450* (Cambridge 1985) 570-90; *idem*, 'Byzantium, 1081-1204: an Economic Reappraisal', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series 20 (1970) 31-52; 'Byzantium, 1081-1204: The Economy Revisited, Twenty Years On', in *The Economy, Fiscal Administration and Coinage of Byzantium* (Northampton 1989) 1-48; A.P. Kazhdan, A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (California 1985) 25-39.

Firstly, it is essential to establish population trends accurately, because the most important factor in agricultural production was, of course, an adequate supply of labour, which also affected landowners' revenues from their tenants and ultimately the stimulus which they could give to commodity production through their spending. This has proved difficult in the past because of the limitations of the source material and widely divergent opinions have been advanced. Lemerle suggested that population trends in Byzantium were sharply at variance with those of the medieval west. He argued for an early medieval expansion, stimulated largely by a large scale settlement of Slavs, and later decline in the Macedonian era. Kaplan has recently proposed a similar outline, seeing the seventh and eighth centuries as a period of prosperity for the Byzantine village communities followed by a period of population decline in the ninth and tenth centuries and some recovery in the eleventh century. His detailed discussion of the early middle ages is, however, rather more cautious than this general conclusion and stresses the possibility of regional variation.¹⁴

Haldon has argued for a sharp population decline in the seventh century. His evidence consists of written sources which suggest an abandonment of land by the clergy and both the rural and urban populations under the pressure of repeated invasions and hostile armies attempting to live off the land. The spread of emphyteutic leases is regarded as an indication of the readiness of landowners to offer more favourable terms to the peasantry in an attempt to maintain productivity on their estates. His discussion is very plausible given the conditions which prevailed in the seventh century, but the written evidence is very sparse and the archaeological evidence, which has become available in recent years, needs to be taken into consideration.¹⁵

Kaplan has used some contrasting non-literary evidence from the Peloponnese in his discussion. He points to a relative abandonment of the coastal area of the Mani in the seventh and eighth centuries by a population falling back on the settlements of the interior and

14. P. Lemerle, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium from the Origins to the Twelfth Century* (Galway 1979) 48-51, 188; Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 529-30.

15. J.F. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century. The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge 1990) 143-46.

the resultant contraction in the area under cultivation. From the ninth century the coastal lands were once again brought into cultivation. He also uses evidence from Olympia to suggest that the cultivated area expanded after the sixth century, but his interpretation of the evidence is open to question. The columns of the temple of Zeus were covered by alluvial deposits around 700. Kaplan believes this process had started around 650. The most likely cause of the deposits of alluvium was that land, which had been deforested and brought under cultivation during a period of expansion, had been abandoned and the top soil gradually eroded and washed away. Therefore, if the alluvium was deposited between 650 and 700, the cultivated area must have diminished in the course of the first half of the seventh century.¹⁶

More reliable information about both the Peloponnese and other regions of Greece is now available due to a number of archaeological surveys which have been conducted in recent years. These surveys are the result of an intensive field walking method and the recording of all the cultural materials — mainly sherds and stone tools — which are found. They cover a broad time span from prehistoric through to the middle ages and sometimes the modern period and the number of sites found give a good indication of the relative density of settlement at different times in a region's history. In the survey of the southern Argolid a site was defined as a location where a cluster of cultural materials was found within a recognisable boundary. These materials are archaeological deposits which have been brought to the surface by either environmental processes or human activity. In the area of the southern Argolid which was intensively surveyed 328 sites were found, a number large enough to suggest that any trends concerning the relative density of settlement over a lengthy period should have some validity. The findings point to a sharp reduction in the number of settlements and the area under cultivation from the seventh century. Numerous sites dating from the fourth to the sixth centuries were found, many of which were located on the coast and were unfortified. This expansion took in land which had previously

16. Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 529-30.

been uncultivated, including steep slopes. This period was followed by one of large scale abandonment and after finds of some coins from the reign of Phokas there are no traces of sites or stray artifacts for at least a century. A similar pattern was found at Nemea where numerous sites from late antiquity and from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries were found. Surveys which have been carried out elsewhere in Greece have also produced comparable results.¹⁷ A couple of qualifications need to be made. Firstly, intensive surveys are a relatively recent development and, as more work of this kind is done, we shall know more clearly how representative these first results are for the whole of Greece. Secondly, only a limited amount is known about the pottery of the so-called 'dark ages' and it is possible that the sharp contraction from the middle of the seventh century is exaggerated by this factor. Future research may lead to a somewhat less pessimistic perspective on this issue, but it is unlikely to overturn the general pattern.

This view is supported by the recent study of the islands of the Byzantine empire by Malamut and of Crete by Tsougarakis. Malamut has collected a great deal of material which, she argues, points towards demographic decline from the seventh century. The literary evidence is, however, so fragmentary, consisting of brief and imprecise extracts from texts, that no conclusive pattern can be derived from it. A clearer perspective on the fluctuations in the density of settlement over a period of centuries can be obtained from the evidence of construction work. Malamut provides references to such work and it is clear that there was a decline in such activity from the middle of the seventh century. Tsougarakis's assessment of the archaeological evidence — basilicas, defence constructions and ceramic finds — led him to conclude that the pre-Arab period in Crete can be divided into two phases. The first, extending from the fifth to the early seventh century,

17. C. Runnels, T. van Andel, 'The Evolution of Settlement in the Southern Argolid, Greece: An Economic Explanation', *Hesperia* 56 (1987) 304-9. See also J.L. Bintliff, A.M. Snodgrass, 'The Cambridge/Bradford Boeotian Expedition: The First Four Years', *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 12 (1985) 123-61; J.C. Wright, J.F. Cherry *et al.*, 'The Nemea Valley Archaeological Project: A Preliminary Report', *Hesperia*, 59 (1990) 617; D. Blackman, K. Branagan, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Lower Catchment of the Ayiofarango Valley', *ABSA* 72 (1977) 13-84.

was characterised by intense building activity and numerous settlements. This view is supported by pottery and coins finds and by inscriptions. In addition to a prosperous agrarian society there is also evidence of flourishing urban centres. In the second phase from the middle of the seventh to the early ninth century there is an almost complete gap — only a few basilicas, little pottery and hardly any coins. Malamut's explanation of early medieval contraction is very simple. It was the result of Slav and Arab raids. Clearly the impact of these attacks on the smaller islands should not be underestimated, but Tsougarakis has argued convincingly that the decline on Crete cannot be attributed to the Arab raids of the second half of the seventh century and the eighth century. The archaeological evidence for destruction on the coast is limited and such raids would have had a slight impact on settlements of the interior, whose populations might be expected to have increased through an influx of refugees. Yet the evidence points to a reduced level of human activity throughout the island and Tsougarakis interprets it in terms of a demographic crisis, the desertion of towns and increased 'ruralisation' of the economy.¹⁸

This evidence suggests that Kaplan has overestimated population levels in the seventh and eighth centuries. According to his interpretation the Byzantine countryside suffered from population loss from the mid-ninth century. The evidence from the Athos archives for widespread abandonment of land in the Chalkidiki peninsula during the first half of the tenth century is linked with the imperial legislation which attempted to prevent powerful landowners from buying up the land of independent cultivators and bringing peasant communities under their authority. The tenth-century legislation was, for Kaplan, a response to a fundamental crisis in the Byzantine rural economy. The transfer of land into the hands of the powerful was accompanied by a rural exodus, which led to a decline in agricultural production because the productivity of Byzantine agriculture depended almost exclusively upon the level of labour-power. This contrasts sharply

18. E. Malamut, *Les îles de l'empire byzantin (VIII-XIIe siècles)* (Paris 1988) 128-40; D. Tsougarakis, *Byzantine Crete from the 5th Century to the Venetian Conquest* (Athens 1988) 132-54.

with Morris's interpretation of the legislation. She regards it as a response by the emperors and their leading officials to the economic and political threat to the administration from a powerful group of provincial magnates. Although the legislation was strengthened at times of rural crisis, the strongest piece of legislation was issued by Basil II because of the threat from Phokas and Skleros. For Morris the conflict between the powerful and the weak was 'an artificial creation of the emperor's closest advisors'. The real conflict was between 'the central imperial power and the dangerously separatist tendencies of the rural aristocracy'.¹⁹

Kaplan relies heavily on the Athonite evidence of depopulation to support his case. It is, therefore, important to determine whether the conditions in the Chalkidiki were symptomatic of a general economic malaise or were specific to that region. The widespread abandonment of land can be linked to Arab and, especially, Bulgar raids at the start of the tenth century. Although the sale of klasmatic lands might have been a tentative step towards recovery, the economy of the region continued to be fragile. At the end of the tenth century some peasants, whose villages had been attacked by Bulgars, temporarily took refuge on an estate belonging to the monastery of Polygyros.²⁰ Economic problems in the Chalkidiki can be related to military insecurity, but such conditions were not prevalent in all parts of the empire. Following the Byzantine reconquests in the east and the recovery of Crete, many parts of Asia Minor were more secure than they had been for centuries. This is likely to have had a positive effect on the agrarian economy, although archival evidence does not survive from tenth-century Asia Minor. Nevertheless, the recovery of towns from their early medieval decline is unlikely to have occurred without a complementary upsurge in the rural economy and there is evidence that peasant proprietors maintained some degree of prosperity and independence in parts of

19. Kaplan, *Les hommes*, 531-40. R. Morris, 'The Powerful and the Poor in Tenth-Century Byzantium: Law and Reality', *Past and Present* 73 (1976) 27.

20. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomides, D. Papachryssanthou, H. Metreveli, *Actes d'Iviron I: Des origines au milieu du XIe siècle* (Archives de l'Athos 14) (Paris 1985) no. 10.

western Asia Minor until the thirteenth century.²¹ The state's policy of selling kismatic lands in the Chalkidiki was different to the policies pursued elsewhere. It was careful to keep large tracts of territory recovered in the east under direct imperial control.²² One possible explanation for these variations in policy was that the magnates of the European provinces were less powerful than their Anatolian counterparts and, therefore, less of a threat to the imperial administration. Another is that conditions in the Chalkidiki were so unfavourable to agricultural production and, consequently, the state's fiscal revenues from the region were so low that large tracts of land were sold cheaply to encourage recovery. In view of the contrast between the state's policies in the Chalkidiki and in Anatolia it would be unwise to generalise from the Athonite evidence on this particular problem. Also the argument for general large scale abandonment of peasant properties should not be inferred from the tenth-century legislation. The interests of landowners were best served by retaining the labour-force on the land. In return for the sale of their land and the loss of their status as independent proprietors the peasants gained a powerful protector who had a vested interest in ensuring that the peasantry was able to cultivate the land and to pay rent.

Settlement in the Chalkidiki peninsula was certainly at a low ebb in the middle of the tenth century, but evidence from the Athos archives shows that from then population levels increased steadily until the fourteenth century. Landowners received privileges entitling them to settle landless peasants as *paroikoi* on their estates and the increase in peasant numbers on the properties of the Athonite monasteries was the result of a general growth in the population. Lefort has emphasised that the rural population of Macedonia reached its

21. M. Angold, 'The Shaping of the Medieval Byzantine "City"', *BF* 10 (1985) 1-37; Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 198-243; C. Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (Harvard, 1976); *idem*, *Ephesus after Antiquity. A Late Antique, Byzantine and Turkish City* (Cambridge 1979); *idem*, 'Archaeology and the "Twenty Cities" of Byzantine Asia', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 81 (1977) 469-86. For evidence of peasant prosperity in western Asia Minor until the thirteenth century, see M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile. Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea (1204-61)* (Oxford 1975) 103, 131.

22. Hendi, *Studies*, 104.

high point in the first half of the fourteenth century when the average size of peasant holdings had become very small.²³

The wealth of our documentation from the Athos archives contrasts sharply with the dearth of such material from other regions and we have to consider whether the demographic trend in Macedonia was typical of most regions of the empire. Fortunately, this lack of documentary evidence can be partly offset by the results of archaeological surveys. Although the final reports of these surveys have not yet been published, the preliminary results suggest a sharp increase in the number of settlements in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the Peloponnese, central Greece and some islands. This general pattern can also be evaluated by reference to the palynological evidence of the spread of agriculture, which Dunn has recently discussed. The advance of plants linked to agriculture and a contraction of woodland had begun in parts of western Macedonia and Thessaly by ca. 1000 or earlier. Although this area of study is very much in its infancy, the early findings fit neatly with those of the archaeological surveys to suggest that the population increase in Macedonia from the tenth to the first half of the fourteenth century, attested in the Athonite archives, was part of a broader pattern of an intensification of settlement through much of Greece during this period.²⁴

Not only was the increase in population sustained over a long period, but in other areas of the economy, notably monetary circulation and trade, there is evidence of considerable vitality during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The quantity of money in circulation certainly increased and higher rates for the *demosion* (the basic land-tax) were imposed by the Alexian fiscal reform of 1106-9. Recently there has been some discussion of the range of other obligations which were imposed on the rural population in addition to the *demosion*. These charges were listed in much greater detail in chrysobulls dating from

23. J. Lefort, 'Population et peuplement en Macédoine orientale IXe-XVe siècle', in V. Kravari, J. Lefort, C. Morrisson, eds., *Hommes et richesses dans l'Empire byzantin II VIIIe-XVe siècle* (Paris 1991) 63-82; *idem*, 'Rural Economy and Social Relations in the Countryside', *DOP* 47 (1993) 101-13; Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 47f.

24. In addition to the references cited above in n.17, see Dunn, 'The Exploitation and Control of Woodland', 242-53.

the middle of the eleventh century than they had been in tenth-century documents. Economic developments and changes in the state's military organisation are relevant here. It can be argued that the increase in the quantity of money in circulation and the eleventh-century debasement of the coinage led to a more flexible, less unwieldy monetary system facilitating commercial transactions.²⁵ This economic upsurge made it feasible for the state to increase the revenues which it collected in cash. At the same time military changes led to an increase in its needs for cash revenues. The crucial development was the greater use of professional soldiers employed by the state. The fiscalisation of the *strateia* was clearly connected to the increase in the wage bill, but other obligations listed in the chrysobulls related to the support of mercenary units in peacetime as well as during war. Their billeting on the rural population was an onerous and potentially arbitrary imposition. In addition the usual range of other obligations, corvees for the maintenance of roads, bridges and fortifications and the provision of food for armies, continued to be exacted. Haldon has linked the greater precision of the fiscal privileges in the eleventh-century chrysobulls with an increase in the demands made on agricultural producers to support the military. The state's strategic requirements have also been emphasised by Dunn in his analysis of a group of obligations relating to woodland products — the felling and transportation of timber, the provision of sawn planks, the construction of ships and the provision of pitch and charcoal.²⁶ I have suggested that a tendency towards commutation of obligations into cash payments was likely to have been a major reason for landowners to require the more detailed listings of the eleventh-century chrysobulls. Although this is only an hypothesis, it fits in with our knowledge of economic conditions in the eleventh century. The greater

25. For a recent survey of Byzantine monetary history, see C. Morrisson, 'Monnaie et finances dans l'empire byzantin, Xe-XI^e siècle', in Kravari, Lefort, Morrisson, eds., *Hommes et richesses*, 291-315.

26. J.F. Haldon, 'Military Administration and Bureaucracy: State Demands and Private Interests', *BF* 19 (1993) 52-54; *idem*, 'Military Service, Military Lands, and the Status of Soldiers: Current Problems and Interpretations', *DOP* 47 (1993) 63; Dunn, 'The Exploitation and Control of Woodland', 266-72.

availability of money made the commutation into cash payments more feasible than in previous centuries, but the process did present serious problems to peasants and landowners. There was scope for arbitrary actions by officials in fixing the levels of payment. Consequently, it was important for landowners to gain privileges to protect themselves against such eventualities.²⁷ These interpretations of the exemption lists are complementary and not incompatible. It is striking that the detailed listing of charges in the chrysobulls began at approximately the same time as the debasement of the coinage. Both developments can be linked to the state's increasing expenditure, particularly in the military sphere. Debasement made the coinage system less unwieldy and may have made it easier for the state to extract cash payments from the rural population. Economic change gave the administration greater flexibility in decision making. Sometimes it would have been more practical to exact payments in cash; on other occasions it would have been preferable not to commute obligations into cash payments, particularly in regions where there was military activity. Some obligations of special strategic significance may have been exacted in cash only rarely. Jacoby has recently shown that even the case of Lampsakos, which has often been used as an example of systematic commutation, is rather more complicated. The charges were given a cash equivalent, which made a monetary payment possible but not necessarily automatic.²⁸ This area of fiscal policy was doubtless subject to considerable variation according to time and place and to political and military conditions, but the general pattern in the eleventh century was one of increasing fiscal pressure upon the rural population, a process which was made possible by the increase in the quantity of money in circulation and an upsurge in trade.

The urban revival of this period, particularly in Greece, has been very effectively demonstrated by a number of historians. This development cannot be treated in isolation from the evolution of the rural

27. Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 113.

28. D. Jacoby, 'The Venetian Presence in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (1204-1261): the Challenge of Feudalism and the Byzantine Inheritance', *JÖB* 43 (1993) 175.

economy. Not only were towns dependent on their rural hinterlands for provisions, but the demands of landowners were an important stimulus to the commercial vitality of towns.²⁹ Agriculture continued to provide the great bulk of the state's fiscal revenues, possibly as much as 95% according to Hendy, whereas Morrisson suggests 80-85%.³⁰ If we exclude exactions in kind and restrict discussion to cash revenues, the former figure is probably too high. We know very little about the urban rents which the state received. Apart from a few figures relating to rents owed to Hagia Sophia, this aspect of the economy of the capital (as well as important provincial towns) is a closed book due to lack of evidence. Markets and fairs played an important role in enabling the peasantry to sell produce and obtain cash for their rent and tax payments. The intensification of the fiscal burden in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, which has already been linked to the increase in the quantity of money in circulation, could have occurred only if it was accompanied by an increase in commercial transactions.³¹

It is insufficient simply to establish that the economy was expanding; the impact of this development on the Byzantine state needs some consideration. A perennial problem for the state was to strike a balance between the need to issue fiscal privileges to powerful individuals

29. See Angold, 'The Shaping of the Medieval Byzantine "City"', 1-37 and Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 214-24 for further references.

30. Hendy, *Studies*, 157; Morrisson, 'Monnaie et finances', 297-98.

31. Although the upsurge in commerce in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is generally accepted, there is disagreement about the importance of trade in the economy and of merchants in Byzantine society. For contrasting recent work, see Hendy, *Studies*, 570-602; *idem*, 'Byzantium 1081-1204: The Economy Revisited', 26; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180* (Cambridge 1993) 142-50. Although Magdalino produces a good deal of evidence relating to commerce and lays great emphasis on the activities of western merchants, he does not directly confront Hendy's discussion of the size of the western investment in Byzantium. Magdalino's argument that the Theban silk industry was largely a response to Italian demand, *ibid.* 144-45, has been very persuasively challenged by D. Jacoby, 'Silk in Western Byzantium Before the Fourth Crusade', *BZ* 84/85 (1991-92) 452-500, who argues that the shift from providing raw materials to manufacturing finished products occurred in Thebes, Corinth and other smaller centres during the later eleventh century at the initiative of the local landowning elite, largely in response to a growing internal market which resulted from a general economic expansion. He also stresses the advantage which Thebes had over Constantinople in access to raw silk and purple dye.

and institutions and the need to retain control of sufficient resources to exercise its authority effectively. Haldon has argued that the state was strong enough to resist requests for exemptions and the consequent reduction in its fiscal revenues until after the death of Basil II in 1025. The position of individual rulers became less secure in relation to potential opposition from the military elements of the elite and therefore they were increasingly compelled to turn to the groups and institutions most likely to support them, the church and monasteries, the bureaucratic and commercial elites of the capital. Fiscal concessions became a means of purchasing support. The abortive attempts of Isaac Komnenos to revoke grants of immunities is an indication that they had amounted to a substantial alienation of resources by the state.³² This is a variation of traditional accounts which regard the eleventh century as a crucial period in which imperial authority was weakened.

A different perspective on this problem is given by Magdalino, who is concerned with the twelfth century. He emphasises that the greatest landowners of the twelfth century were the crown and individuals and institutions closely associated with imperial power and based in Constantinople. The latter included the 'pious houses', a category of imperial foundations such as the Petria, Myrelaion and Orphanotropheion which were administered by imperial officials. Their estates were far flung throughout the empire and generally located in fertile coastal regions to facilitate the flow of resources to Constantinople. Far from losing its grip on the empire's resources the state continued to exploit them effectively for much of the twelfth century.³³

I have suggested that for much of the eleventh century a balance was maintained between the divergent interests of the state and landowners. Landowners were allowed the rights to revenues from landless peasants established on their estates and, in this way, the state's financial interests were not damaged. Only during the serious military and financial crisis of the 1070s and 1080s were more

32. Haldon, 'Military Administration', 57-59.

33. P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I. Komnenos 1143-1180*, 164-70.

extensive concessions made to the aristocracy. The chrysobulls of these decades were in general more generous to the landowning elite whose economic position was strengthened at the expense of the state.³⁴ This argument needs some modification. The extensive privileges issued in the 1070s and 1080s should not be seen as a sign of a fundamental shift in economic power. The documents of the 1080s can give a misleading impression. They set out the extensive privileges granted by Alexios I to members of the imperial family, a limited number of favoured individuals like Pakourianos and Kephala and to institutions like the monastery of Lavra. The concessions made to Lavra are particularly misleading because they give the impression of a weak administration unable to control a powerful landowner, but detailed information survives precisely because Lavra was a special case. This contrasts sharply with the strong measures which Alexios took, using fiscal mechanisms, to confiscate property from other landowners and to assign it to imperial organisations like the *orphanotropheion* or to members of the imperial family. The technical procedures are clearly shown in documents from the archives of the monasteries of Mount Athos. In particular, recently published documents from the Ivron archive demonstrate that the monastery suffered the confiscation of a substantial part of its estates and provide a useful counterbalance to the one-sided perspective given by Lavra's documents. The complaints about taxation by Theophylakt of Ochrid and other writers should be seen in the context of a vigorous financial policy which both increased the general rate of taxation and extended the lands directly controlled by the administration.³⁵ The effectiveness of this policy made possible the flow of wealth towards Constantinople in the twelfth century which Magdalino had set out in some detail.

The evidence for economic expansion in this period has been strongly reinforced by most recent research, but it is important not to overlook the limits to growth in an economy which did not benefit

34. Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 68.

35. A. Harvey, 'Financial Crisis and the Rural Economy', in M. Mullett, D. Smythe, eds., *Alexios I Komnenos* (Belfast 1995) 167-84; *idem*, 'The Land and Taxation in the Reign of Alexios I Komnenos: the Evidence of Theophylakt of Ochrid', *REB* 51 (1993) 139-54.

from any technological advances. The importance of Kaplan's work in this area is considerable, even if we do not accept his view that the late eleventh-century economy was afflicted by an economic *blockage*. A combination of the state's fiscal demands and the greater economic opportunities resulting from the urban revival ensured that the peasantry became more involved in commerce, but the most powerful stimulus to economic growth was unquestionably the expenditure of the state and powerful landowners.

*Department of Historical and Critical Studies
University of Northumbria at Newcastle*

Reviews

Αἰκ. Μακρυνικόλα, *Βιβλιογραφία Γιάννη Ρίτσου, 1924-1989*. Athens: Ἑταιρεία Σπουδῶν Νεοελληνικοῦ πολιτισμοῦ καὶ γενικῆς παιδείας, 1993. pp.736.

This is a very large, well-produced and beautifully-bound book charting the publication of Yannis Ritsos' work and its reception up to the year of his death. The main part of the volume contains the following sections: Greek editions; First editions in Greek publications; Non-Greek editions; Studies of Ritsos, judgements and comments; Performances of works; Discography. This is followed by a short list of supplementary information, of publications not traced and of the 48 collections of poems that the poet intended for publication at his death. The indices include Ritsos' pseudonyms; Proper names in titles, dedications, notes etc.; Greek titles; Categories of poems in Greek editions; Titles in non-Greek editions; Non-Greek editions, by language; Non-Greek editions containing unpublished poems; Non-Greek editions also containing the Greek original; Books and monographs about Ritsos; Special dedicatory volumes of periodicals and newspapers; Index of persons. The volume closes with a list of the photographs it includes.

At first glance, one wonders whether the presentation of the work is inappropriate to its purpose, as if a romantic poem about the sea were to be described by a series of tide tables. The first and longest section faithfully records 533 publications, containing, for example, 39 editions (or reprintings — Greek terminology rarely discriminates) for *Epitaphios*, 35 for *Romiosyni* and 33 for the *Moonlight Sonata*. The numbered collected volumes called *Poems* are charted too, the first reaching 19 editions, increasing, of course, the number of reprintings of those poems or collections it includes which have also appeared separately. All this is done in carefully-graded type, with bold numbers assigned to each item and capitalised headings controlling text in small but very clear letters covering a possible 52 lines on each page. The contents of each collection are meticulously set out with place and date of writing, as characteristically marked by the poet for most of

his mature work. There is an indication whether or not reprinting has involved changes in the text. Particular attention is given to Ritsos' notes, found in many of the volumes, about the genesis of poems and their formation into collections.

But as soon as one begins to use the book, any impression of inappropriateness disappears. The publication and reception of the poet's work was tragically distorted by political pressures, so that throughout his life after 1936 Ritsos was either under censorship (total or partial) or trying to publish his backlog from past periods of censorship at the same time as his current work. Many of Ritsos' notes, including the date and place of writing of each poem, were probably, in part at least, due to these distortions, as the poet tried to re-establish for his readers the historical articulation of his writing which has been broken by political bans on its regular publication. Ekaterini Makrynika has merely continued this work on a larger scale, bringing many decades of careful annotation within a single framework and the confines of one book. The first section has thus the sanction of the wider fulfilment of authorial intention.

But the development of Ritsos' plans was not always unproblematic and linear. It is possible, from a careful inspection of Makrynika's lists, to trace changes of intent which otherwise might easily escape the overwhelming majority of readers and critics, who do not have access to a variety of editions of the work under analysis. The present reviewer, for example, got to know the book during an examination of the publication history of the collection *Fourth Dimension*, in which it was important to use notes buried in particular editions of individual poems of that volume which give clues to the poet's developing concept of the whole. No such analysis would be possible without using the book under review or redoing much of the work on which it reports.

Such analyses will naturally pass on from the first section of the book to others. Many poems were first published in ephemeral periodicals before finding a place in one of the poet's collections, and this may have significance. Equally, many of Ritsos' poems and his developing attitudes to his work may be traced in publications which appeared outside Greece: in the case of *Fourth Dimension*, for example, one must examine poems included or omitted from the

developing canon of work translated and published under that title in France and Romania. Then there is invaluable information to be found in published studies of Ritsos' work, some of which plainly had privileged access to the poet's intentions. The section of the book listing studies and comments on Ritsos, like all such bibliographies referring to work on one poet, will assist those analysing the history of the reception of a particular poem or collection to feel confident that they have gathered all information available in Greece on that collection or published at a particular time, with some chronological precision.

Ekaterini Makrynika has enjoyed in her work the full resources of the Kedros publishing house and the Ritsos family, together with some of the poet's closest friends and collaborators who are thanked in the introduction. This assistance has made the Greek sections of the book very complete — though it is instructive, for those studying the reception of the poet, that even these resources and more than two decades of work have still left some of the editions untraceable, so that a few publication details have to be given by inference. The collection of materials from outside Greece is very full, but inevitably not so magisterially complete as the Greek sections.

In the end, one must judge the work of Makrynika as a splendid basis for the philological dimension of future criticism of Ritsos' work. The present reviewer has also concluded, with some surprise, that Ritsos' criticism was and is in dire need of philology (a view which was repeatedly put by Giorgos Veloudis). In the analysis of a poet who wrote so much, it would always have been difficult to follow a historical or thematic thread through his work, even if its publication had followed normal patterns. But the chronological dislocation of its appearance is bound to lead to misapprehension, if readers assume correspondence between the date of its writing and the date of publication. With the benefit of this book, one begins to feel that much published criticism on individual poems or collections is flawed by not taking into consideration — even by rejecting its relevance — the witness of other work which the poet was writing at the same time as that under examination.

One might end with a project for the future, inspired by this last thought, which would provide another major contribution from the

Ritsos archive for those who are trying to grapple with the massive volume of work the poet has left. There could be a chronologically-based catalogue of Ritsos' activity, giving a full record of his poetical biography (and, incidentally, his geographical movements) according to the annotations he has left for so much of his literary output. Some would complain that this would stress the centrality of the author in his work, in an age when other interpretative strategies are preferred, and in connection with a poet whose political persona has already exercised a most unhealthy domination over the whole critical enterprise. My reaction would be that the authorial presence may only be exorcised after examination of all the evidence available. The author may only be banished once his presence has been charted and carefully assessed. The Ritsos bibliography of Ekaterini Makrynika marks a major step in this critical undertaking.

Michael Jeffreys,
Department of Modern Greek,
University of Sydney

Διονυσίου Σολωμοῦ, *Ποιήματα καὶ πεζά*. Ἐπιμέλεια καὶ εἰσαγωγὴς Στυλιανὸς Ἀλεξίου. Athens: Στιγμή, 1994. 653 pp.

Since few of Solomos' works were published or even prepared for publication by their author, the task of editing them is immensely difficult. Alexiou's is the first serious edition of Solomos to appear since the hitherto standard edition by Linos Politis. Politis' edition, like all previous editions published after 1859, adhered closely to Polyas' edition of that year. Of all the editions published since then (apart from various attempts to produce new editions of individual works), Alexiou's departs most radically from the way in which Polyas presented his material.

Politis' edition of the *Ἄπαντα* appeared in four volumes whose publication was spread over a period of more than forty years and which divided up the material in an unsatisfactory manner. Volume I, containing the Greek poems, appeared in 1948; volume II, containing

the Greek prose works together with the texts that Solomos wrote in Italian, was published in 1955; an 'appendix' to this volume — in effect a volume in itself — appeared in 1960, containing not only Greek translations of the Italian works but, inconveniently, a glossary to the Greek texts published in the first two volumes; volume III, devoted to the correspondence, was published in 1991, after Politis' death. The most obvious difference displayed by Alexiou's edition is that it consists of a single, coherently structured volume. Secondly, Alexiou provides introductory material to each work — something lacking from Politis' edition.

A review of this edition must address the following matters: (a) explicit editorial principles, (b) editorial practice, and (c) peritextual material.

Alexiou's chief aim is to make Solomos' works as approachable as possible. For this reason he refers to his edition as a 'selection' from Solomos' work (p.17) which includes 'the completed works and the fullest fragments' (p.13). While he tends to follow Polyas in his choice among the alternative variants for each line, he dispenses with the policy adopted by Polyas — and followed by Politis — of including other variants in addition to those presented as the main text, arguing that the inclusion of alternative variants disturbs 'τὴν προβολὴ τῶν λυρικῶν ἐνοτήτων' (p.14). He also omits fragments that make little sense on their own, while he presents as more or less complete many poems whose previous editors insisted on labelling them as 'fragments'.

The most controversial aspect of Alexiou's editorial principles is his insistence that Solomos *would have* published his texts in this way if he had finalised them for publication — a counter-factual claim that can be neither proved nor refuted, since in the case of many poems Solomos' final intention was to abandon them unfinished. He criticises the so-called 'analytical editions' of some of Solomos' works, where, he claims, the poem disappears beneath a mixture of Greek and Italian material, repetitions, blanks, and half-completed lines. Conversely, he refuses to be bound by the principle that one should publish only Solomos' last draft of a work, on the grounds that if Solomos himself had finalised the text, he would in each case have chosen the aesthetically finest alternative among his variants, irrespective of

whether this alternative was the last of those that he had written down. (Alexiou, like all editors, has rightly published the three structurally different drafts of 'Οἱ ἐλεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι'.)

Editorial practice can be chiefly divided into (i) choice of texts and their order of publication, and (ii) choices between manuscript variants and emendations of manuscript readings.

Many of Solomos' works that are familiar from earlier editions are absent from Alexiou's edition. These omissions are based on aesthetic — and often purely subjective — criteria. The reader will find none of Solomos' youthful satires, which provide valuable insights both into his poetic theory and into the everyday linguistic situation from which his more mature and serious poetry detached itself. Thirteen of the other early poems are also omitted, among them the ode on the death of Markos Botsaris (especially interesting for Solomos' use of Homeric references); the first of the two poems entitled 'Funeral Ode' and the poem on Nikephoros Vryennios are missing too. (A section entitled 'Funeral Odes' contains, perversely, the poem 'Εἰς μοναχήν', written on the occasion of a young woman's entry into a nunnery.)

As for the order of presentation, Alexiou claims that this is 'basically chronological' (p.18). In fact, however, although the layout of the works *within* each section is chronological, the order of the sections themselves is based on criteria of genre, and here again a subjective aesthetic hierarchy seems to have established itself. Thus, for instance, while the section entitled 'Youthful lyrics' consists of poems dating from the period beginning before 1821 and ending in 1826, it is followed by the 'Hymn to Liberty', which was written in 1823. A separate category of 'epigrams', dating from every stage of Solomos' career, appears much later in the volume. Thus, while 'Ἡ φαρμακωμένη' (1826) appears on pp.73-75, 'Ἡ καταστροφή τῶν Ψαρῶν', written the previous year, is printed on p.344.

The Greek 'epigrams' are followed by a small selection of the most important Italian texts, in the original accompanied by Greek translation, and consisting chiefly of Italian drafts and prose-poems composed in Solomos' last decade. There follows the satirical poem 'Ἡ τρίχα' (1833), which has been rescued from the end of Politis' second volume (where it appeared because it came to light after the

publication of volume D), only to be placed after the Italian texts that postdate it. Then comes 'Ἡ Γυναίκα τῆς Ζάκυθος' (1825ff.), followed by the 'Dialogue' on the language question (1824). Finally Alexiou publishes a small selection of the most important of Solomos' letters. The order in which Alexiou prints Solomos' works precludes the possibility of following their chronological development.

In his readings of the manuscripts Alexiou has, as I have said, usually followed Polyas, taking into account emendations proposed since then by a number of scholars. Many of his own emendations are astute and ingenious. Among his most radical and most successful changes to previous editions has been in the 'Πόρφυρας', which, from being a 'fragment' in eight numbered sections containing a total of 45 lines (some of which are incomplete), has become a complete and unified poem of 34 lines. Before it, as he has done with a number of other poems in his edition, Alexiou publishes the most complete Italian draft of the poem, which clearly indicates its overall structure. He has boldly identified Polyas and Politis' sections 1 and 2 as fragments of two different poems, and he prints them separately from the 'Πόρφυρας' (pp.313-14 and 353). In relation to the 'Πόρφυρας', as with other poems, Alexiou constantly promotes Solomos' texts as concise, finished poems rather than as huge projects of which only tiny fragments were achieved — which is how earlier editors (and Solomos himself) viewed them.

Of 'Ἀάμπρος' Alexiou has omitted all but the completed stanzas, with the result that many fragments which give an inkling of crucial stages in the plot (sections 1-8, 10, 11-17, 22-24, and 27-31 in Polyas and Politis) are missing; what is more, Alexiou makes no mention of these fragments in his introduction. Whereas 'Ἀάμπρος' took up forty pages in Politis' edition, it covers only eleven in Alexiou's. Similarly the text of 'Οἱ ἐλεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι' is drastically curtailed by the omission (or, at best, the relegation to the Introduction) of a large number of lines that have often been admired for their poetic force. On the other hand Alexiou has brilliantly transposed Polyas and Politis' sections 6 and 7 of the second draft of this poem, which clearly restores them to their proper order and at last renders them coherent. Yet he insists on printing the prose material in his new section 6 without informing the reader that this material was translated

by Polyas from Solomos' Italian, while he omits almost all of the verses in Solomos' own Greek which are incorporated in this prose draft. Alexiou's inconsistency in his use of draft material published by Polyas is again apparent in section 4 of the second draft of 'Ἐλεύθεροι πολιορκημένοι', which consists entirely of Polyas' translation from Solomos' Italian prose draft, whereas in all other cases except those mentioned here he omits such material.

'Ἡ Γυναίκα τῆς Ζάκυθος' presents one of the most difficult editorial challenges, since Solomos originally drafted it in 1825-6, then revised this draft after 1829, then came back to it again in 1833, when he added some completely new material. Because the very plot had changed over the years, it is impossible to integrate the three workings into a single text. Here, as elsewhere, Alexiou stresses the way that Solomos, not content to leave well alone, insisted on bringing about drastic changes to his text which broke up the original unit of the composition, resulting in contradictions and in a fatal reduction in poetic intensity. Alexiou's version is based largely on the first draft, incorporating later emendations and additions only when they improve and fill gaps in the original material.

The peritextual material — chiefly an extensive introduction to each group of texts, and the glossary — are valuable aids to reading and appreciating Solomos' work. Alexiou's introductions include illuminating and instructive historical background material, a summary of the text where necessary, a discussion of its interpretation and evaluation, and details about the manuscript readings, including a defence of his detailed editorial choices. It would have been preferable for these aspects of the introductions to be more clearly separated from one another for ease of consultation, especially for the sake of the non-specialist reader who is not interested in textual criticism. The glossary incorporates a number of corrections to erroneous renderings in Politis' glossary.

Among the many possible detailed criticisms and disagreements, I would pick out the following. Alexiou claims that in 'Ἡ φαρμακωμένη στὸν Ἄδη' the girl's lover commits suicide, whereas Eleni Tsantsanoglou (*Μιὰ λανθάνουσα ποιητική σύνθεση τοῦ Σολωμοῦ*, Athens 1982, p.131) rightly talks merely of his 'imminent death' (which could be from illness). In 'Ὁ Κρητικός' Alexiou

preserves the last couplet of Polyas and Politis' section 20, even though it appears only in the first draft, where in any case it appears at the beginning of the following section; placing the section-break after these two lines instead of before them spoils the powerful effect that Solomos intended by abruptly ending the section with the enigmatic line, 'κι ὁμπρὸς μου ἰδοὺ ποὺ βρέθηκε μία φεγγαροντυμένη' — as though we all know what 'φεγγαροντυμένες' are!

Alexiou refuses to use Solomos' form 'πολιορκισμένοι' in the title of his famous poem (although he is content to allow the poet to use it in 'Ἡ Γυναίκα τῆς Ζάκυθος', p.491), on the grounds that we cannot be sure that Solomos did not use the 'correct' form when he was talking about the poem with his friends! In relation to the same poem Alexiou insists that various different references to women apply to a single character named Martha (pp.238, 239, 247, 338, 362, 368), irrespective of the fact that Solomos is sometimes referring to the mother of a child and sometimes to an 'orfanetta', i.e. to at least two different characters. On p.251 he makes no attempt to interpret the vision of the 'girl clad in the moonlight' at the end of the 'Temptation' passage, where this figure serves a clearly quite different function than in 'Ὁ Κρητικός'. Finally, on p.474, he claims that imperfect forms such as 'ἐμίλειε' are Cretan; yet Spyros Kavnadias ('Ἡ λαϊκὴ ζωὴ καὶ γλώσσα στὸ ἐλληνόγλωσσο ἔργο τοῦ Δ. Σολωμοῦ', *Zakynthos* 1987, pp.113-14) states that they are Zakynthian as well as Cretan.

Clearly the specialist will still have to have recourse to Politis' edition of Solomos as well as to the manuscripts. But if we view Alexiou's edition as a literary edition aimed at a wider public ('χρηστική έκδοση') rather than as a critical edition intended for the academic purist, we should welcome it as the first compact, coherent edition of Solomos to be produced with such single-minded and conscientious attention to the readability of Greece's national poet.

Peter Mackridge,
University of Oxford

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